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Official Records

Seventy-first session

5th plenary meeting
Monday, 19 September 2016, 12.30 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Thomson ..... (Fiji)

In the absence of the Co-Chair, Ms. Young (Belize), Acting Co-Chair, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 2.10 p.m.

High-level plenary meeting on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants

Agenda items 13 and 117 (*continued*)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

The Acting Co-Chair: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Vladimir Makei, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Belarus.

Mr. Makei (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): In today's globalized world, human mobility has become an increasingly topical issue. The current situation concerning migrants and refugees throughout the world remains complex and is still characterized by a lack of predictability and controls. lies. There is a crisis of understanding of cause-and-effect relations in emergency humanitarian situations accompanied by mass movements of people. Most refugees today are the indirect result of protracted armed conflicts in different regions and countries. That is the result of direct interference in the internal affairs of sovereign countries, in contravention of the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations. It is in that context and in the context of today's meeting that this is an excellent opportunity to emphasize the inalienable nature of the rights and principles enshrined in the Charter. We call for everyone to respect them.

The modern system that is designed to legally regulate the hosting of migrants and refugees is currently being put to a serious test. In some destination countries, pledges made in the past at the international level in terms of safeguarding the rights of migrants and refugees, and human rights in general, have not been met in many cases. We need to respond to the social tensions and hostility towards refugees and migrants. We believe that in order to prevent these situations, refugees and migrants must have access in host countries to sufficient means to protect their rights. Specific attention to migrants and refugees must be focused on the most vulnerable segments, including the disabled, the elderly and women and children, especially unaccompanied minors.

There can be no doubt that uncontrolled mass flows of people generate fertile ground for organized crime. That leads to human trafficking, destabilizes societies and leads to more hostile attitudes towards migrants and refugees. In such conditions, host countries need to maintain a balance so that their laws can, on the one hand, provide for the seamless integration of migrants and refugees into their societies and, on the other hand, not run counter to the national interests and take into account opportunities and peculiar aspects and opportunities in specific regions and countries.

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At the same time, we must fully understand that smooth integration means that we not only need to provide for the rights of migrants and refugees, but that there are obligations to respect national law. Until recently, migrants and refugees have often been seen as a sort of burden. However, we are happy to note that awareness has been changing and that the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which world leaders adopted here last year, acknowledges that migrants and refugees can become active participants in sustainable development and contribute to economic growth.

In order to do that, we must create conditions for orderly, safe, legal, and responsible migration. International support in that regard is very important, but financial assistance to host countries to develop necessary mechanisms to take in refugees and migrants is not always sufficient. Quite often, host countries must deal with these issues on their own. Therefore, humanitarian assistance must be closely linked to issues related to financing for development.

Actively advocated by many countries today, the principle of shared responsibility must first of all place responsibility on those who fanned the flames of conflict on the territories of sovereign countries, which have forced people to leave their homes en masse. In order to streamline and strengthen mechanisms for managing migration flows, we need coordinated action on the part of all involved. That is why, in ensuring favourable migration conditions throughout the world, we believe in the important role of partnerships among all parties involved, including first and foremost countries themselves, civil society, international organizations and the private sector. Such partnerships must be based on mutual trust, understanding and assistance.

Finally, we would like to welcome the International Organization for Migration as a new member of the United Nations family. We are convinced that the potential and vast expertise of that respect organization will help us further to effectively achieve our goals in the area of migration policy.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Seychelles.

Ms. Potter (Seychelles): We are here today to decide whether we can act as if it is business as usual that millions of people displaced and racing to save their lives and families is a phenomenon that we are bound to accept in a world torn apart by war and hate and battered by climate change; whether we can allow a few countries to bear the burden of this enormous global crisis — countries that, I must say, have been incredibly generous in this time of crisis; and whether we can just put a band-aid on this situation and hope, against all odds, that things will go back to normal. We have to find a just and lasting solution to the problem of mass irregular movements of people.

Only a rights-based approach can guarantee that. Migrants as well as the populations of both transit and destination countries are human beings, and hence rights-holders. The international community, States and Governments, along with civil society organizations and groups, whether in countries of origin, transit or destination, are duty-beareres with respect to those rights-holders, and they should endeavour to deliver on their rights. Respect for the rights of migrants is the only way to protect them from human traffickers, smugglers of migrants and violent extremists, who take advantage of their movement to rip them off or commit acts of terror in countries of transit or destination. Such respect for human rights should also extend to the population of transit and destination countries by ensuring that migration inflows take place within the carrying capacity of local communities, so that migrants may feel welcome and their integration facilitated.

Respect for the human rights of migrants and local populations in countries of transit and destination is possible only within the context of regular, controlled flows of migrants. Large, irregular flows disrupt that process. Therefore, urgent actions are needed to prevent regular, managable flows of migrants from turning into irregular, mass movements. That is possible only if the international community tackles the causes that unleash large, irregular displacements of migrants: armed conflicts, natural disasters and the absence of inclusive governance. Armed conflicts always lead to the migration of civilians fleeing combat zones. But such movement tends to become massive in situations where there is no respect for international humanitarian law. Strict adherence to international humanitarian law will contribute to a solution to the current migration crisis. Good governance, democracy and inclusive development models will go a long way towards reducing the risk of the outbreak of conflicts.

Against the backdrop of despair on the ground we are witnessing today, let us look towards the bird of hope facing us. Like the country in which we meet today, Seychelles too is a melting pot of cultures, colours

and races. It is a land born of migrants, nurtured over centuries through the arrival of people from all ends of the world, aiding the growth of our vibrant economy. We are undoubtedly strengthened by our diversity, and it is an experience we share with pride.

Let us make decisions today that reflect our global society's potential for compas ion and collaboration, and show that we are capable of so much more than destruction, hate and fear. Let us decide that we can, and must, do more together.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now give the floor to Her Excellency Ms. Pendukeni Iivula-Ithana, Minister for Home Affairs and Immigration of Namibia.

Ms. Iivula-Ithana (Namibia): I am privileged and honoured to address the 2016 high-level meeting on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants in this historic city of New York. This meeting is taking place when movements of people have reached an unprecedented level, thereby requiring nations to work together to manage the movement and ensure that the rights of migrants and refugees are observed and respected.

Namibia is hosting refugees that came to our country as a result of conflicts in their countries of origin. The Government provides support and amenities in a dedicated place, making it easy to ensure safety and provide shelter to refugees. The Government also provides free primary and secondary education to refugees and asylum seekers' children, as well as free medical services to all refugees. Currently, Namibia is hosting 3,388 refugees and asylum seekers.

Providing assistance to refugees and asylum seekers, however, is not a sustainable exercise for Governments, nor does it provide a dignified life for the affected community. The world must look at addressing the root causes of the displacement that is forcing human beings to abandon their livelihoods in the countries of their birth for lives in refugee settlements. Although host countries may, where possible, consider local integration for those who choose it, which provides a degree of a dignified life, not all refugees can be happy with that option.

Last June, Namibia launched its first country migration profile. The profile has provided further clarity that migrants are contributing to economic growth and development in our country by filling positions in various sectors where the internal labour market has critical shortages. That has presented us an opportunity to tap into migrants in those sectors while directing the training of locals in areas identified to reduce the deficit in the labour market. Deliberate policies are now being crafted to respond to the need and provide a policy framework in managing the process.

While migration has a positive impact on development, Governments must ensure that people are not migrating out of desperation but as a choice. Equally, we need to encourage our people to use legal channels of migration. The sending, transit and receiving States need to work together on that matter to reduce the vulnerabilities created when illegal migration channels are used.

Continued political unrest worldwide remains the driver of millions of people from their places of habitatation to the unknown world across international boundaries. At the same time, resources to provide support to refugees are diminishing. The international community needs to work towards eliminating all man-made causes of migration so as to reduce human suffering and improve human lives. Those causes are well known and well documented — such as human rights violations and abuse, armed conflict, persecution, terrorism, poverty and food insecurity. Environmentally, some countries are adversely affected by climate change and natural disasters.

Nations need to work together to improve conditions so as to make migration a choice rather than the only alternative. On the other hand, receiving and sending countries need to work together to ensure respect for the human rights of those who choose to migrate and those forced to leave their places of residence due to unfortunate conflicts or natural disasters. Namibia, although also affected by the effects ofclimate change, is ready to play its part in this endeavour.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Firuden Nabiyev, Chief of State of the Migration Service of Azerbaijan.

Mr. Nabiyev (Azerbaijan) (*spoke in Russian*): The expansion of the geographic area of conflicts and crises across the world over recent years has resulted in an increse in the number of persons who have lost their lives or been forced to flee. More than 60 million people have been forcibly displaced as a result of conflicts and violations. The international community must first and foremose prevent armed conflict and step up efforts to

resolve existing conflicts in accordance with the norms and principles of international law, first and foremost the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States.

With regard to addressing issues relating to refugees, migrants and internally displaced persons (IDPs), it is very important to cooperate with organizations such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration and the relevant United Nations mechanisms.

We believe that, in today's difficult situation, the needs of IDPs — the number of which now stands at a record 41 million — should not go unaddressed. They require a holistic approach from the international community. This difficult situation requires serious consideration by way of drafting a universally binding document based on the guiding principles on internal displacement. In that context, Azerbaijan welcomes the adoption of the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons. That document is considered to be the first binding one on forced displacement. At the same time, we hope that the ambitious goals set out in the Secretary-General's agenda for humankind to reduce forced displacement by at least 50 per cent by 2030 will be fully achieved.

We believe that IDP issues are sensitive and important. That is understandable. Our country has faced large-scale intenal displacement issues due to the occupation of our territories by Armenia. Azerbaijan, with a total population of 9.7 million, is among the countries with the greatest burden of displaced persons per capita. It has been more than 25 years that Armenia has been grossly violating norms and principles of international law. It is continuing its efforts to shore up the current status quo and hinder the return of thousands of Azerbaijani IDPs to their homeland. Furthermore, it should be noted with regret that Armenia is taking advantage of the current refugee and migrant crisis to settle Armenians from Syria in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. That is an outright violation of international humanitarian law, first and foremost the Fourth Geneval Convention of 1949.

Azerbaijan has undertaken to resolve all the problems of IDPs forced from their homeland. That includes measures to provide employment, education, accomodation and medical needs. The Government is addressing all those issues on an ongoing basis. In the recent period, 100 model settlements have been built to accommodate thousands of refugee and IDP families. Over the past 20 years, approximately $6 billion has been spent to adress IDP social issues in Azerbaijan. The efforts of our Government on IDP issues have been highly appreciated by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration and others.

We believe that today's New York Political Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) reflects the notion that we should consider strategies to protect IDPs, including to prevent situations that give rise to IDPs and reduce their number. By doing so, we give a global push for the efforts to prepare an effective protection network for this vulnerable group of people. We stand ready to continue to make our contribution to that process.

The Acting Co-Chair: We have no other speakers in the Hall at this time. I shall suspend the meeting until the matter can be straightened out.

The meeting was suspended at 2.50 p.m. and resumed at 3.05 p.m.

Co-Chair Lykketoft took the Chair.

Co-Chair Lykketoft: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Salahuddin Rabbani, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan.

Mr. Rabbani (Afghanistan): At the outset, I wish to convey our gratitude to His Excellelncy Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for convening today's high-level meeting on addressing the large movement of refugees and migrants. We have gathered here today against the backdrop of an unprecedented flow of migrants and refugees across the world. The time has come, therefore, to put into motion a concerted international response to address this growing phenomenon holistically and in all its aspects.

Based on our own experience, Afghanistan is well aware of the complex challenge associated with the issue of global refugees. The legacy of more than two decades of armed conflict and violence brought about a situation whereby millions of Afghan women and children were forced to leave their homes and seek refuge abroad. More than 95 per cent of our refugees live in the neighbouring countries of Iran and Pakistan, and we are grateful for their generosity in hosting our people.

Since beginning a new chapter in Afghanistan in 2001, millions of Afghans have returned to their homeland, marking the largest repatriation movement in modern history. For several years now, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other humanitarian organizations have had the central role in international efforts to support and assist Afghan refugees during some of the most difficult moments of our nation's life. We are grateful for their support and commitment to address the plight of our refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs).

Needless to say, millions of our citizens remain refugees and continue to face difficult social, economic and humanitarian conditions. In that regard, I would like to underscore the importance of ensuring that all refugees, whether Afghan or of any other nationality, are granted respect and equal treatment by host countries, in accordance with international humanitarian law and human rights law.

Since its formation two years ago, the National Unity Government has pursued a national and regional effort together with our relevant international partners for a viable and long-term solution to the plight of Afghan refugees, with special emphasis on voluntary return and sustainable reintegration. To that end, the Quadripartite Commission — made up of Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees — and the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees, adopted in Geneva in 2012, remain the overarching framework within which the National Unity Government is striving to achieve the voluntary, gradual and dignified return of our refugees and their sustainable reintegration

As a matter of equal importance, we are also adamantly focused on addressing the problems faced by our internally displaced persons, who over the past two years have increased in number mainly as a result of insecurity in some parts of the country caused by violence and terrorism committed by the Taliban and affiliated groups. I would like to reiterate our appeal to the international community to play a long-term supporting role to effectively address the plight of our refugees and IDPs.

We in the National Unity Government are cognizant that Afghanistan's social and economic development provides the ultimate guarantee for resolving the challenges facing refugees and IDPs in a holistic manner. We are working to improve conditions for our people in towns, villages and districts across Afghanistan. To that end, we look forward to the upcoming Brussels Conference on Afghanistan to be held in two weeks' time, where we hope the international community will make new pledges of assistance to help us implement our National Peace and Development Framework, which aims at enabling us to achieve self-reliance during the transformation decade.

We are pleased that today's high-level meeting places due focus and attention on addressing the root causes of migration at the global level. In most cases, those who resettle do so not as a matter of choice but of circumstances. Poverty, conflict and a lack of economic opportunities are some of the main factors leading to resettlement. In that regard, the central role of the United Nations will remain of strategic importance in providing support across a wide spectrum, including development assistance, conflict prevention, systems development, peacebuilding and national reconciliation.

The adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), last September here in New York was a milestone charting a new development framework over the 15 years. The implementation of the SDGs will go a long way in helping to ensure peace, security and a stable economic environment in countries of origin by offering an incentive to people and families to avoid resettlement.

In that context, Afghanistan expresses its concern about the continuing trend whereby migrants and refugees are subject to acts of xenophobia, discrimination and other stereotypes based on religious and cultural differences in some parts of the world. A renewed effort is needed to push back against that dangerous narrative, which constitutes a clear violation of international humanitarian law, including human rights law. We welcome the Secretary-General's proposal to launch a global campaign to counter various forms of discrimination against migrants and refugees. We must perceive diversity as a source of strength and optimism, rather than seeing it from a negative perspective. After all, humankind is one, irrespective of our cultural, religious and geographical differences. We all aspire towards the same goals: the chance to live in peace, to prosper and, above all, to ensure a better and brighter life for our children and future generations.

Today's summit is a fitting opportunity for all of us to reaffirm our shared commitment to protect and promote the rights of all refugees and migrants, and to

do so in adherence to the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Afghanistan welcomes the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) and its two annexes, entilted "Comprehensive refugee response framework" and "Towards a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration".

Before concluding, I would like to convey our gratitude to the co-facilitators for for so ably leading the intergovernmental negotiations on our conference declaration.

Co-Chair Lykketoft: I now give the floor to Her Excellency Ms. Susana Malcorra, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Worship of Argentina.

Ms. Malcorra (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are gathered here to find concrete responses in the face of what has become the greatest migration crisis in recent history. Migration movements are not a new phenomenon. A year ago, in the Sustainable Development Goals, we took note of its importance to developing economies. However, the images we have seen recently cause pain and concern for all of us. Day after day, we receive news of thousands of people suffering and dying in an attempt to save themselves from violence, persecution and poverty. Against that backdrop, we cannot, and must not, remain indifferent. It is time to act.

In my counry of Argentina, immigration has been from the very beginning one of the main drivers of our economy. Immigration has had a decisive impact on our social, political and cultural order. For Argentina, immigration is part of our social DNA. It is difficult to find someone of my generation who does not have a parent, grandparent or great-grandparent who cam from abroad to immigrate to our country. Many of them left to flee war and hunger — that is, they were refugees. We live together peacebly — Christians, Jews and Muslims. We are an open society enriched by its diversity.

Argentina is home to the largest number of immigrants in our region. Thousands of people from Paraguay, Bolivia, Chile and Peru have seamlessly integrated themselves into our country in recent years. It is a matter of pride to know that, in a world with an abundance of trends towards fragmentation and conflict, my country is an example of tolerance, coexistence and, above all, solidarity. As the Sescretary-General rightly points out, the global migrant and refugee crisis is one of solidarity, not of numbers.

Let us recall the spirit of solidarity that once brought our countries together. Today we have an opportunity to be part of a joint solution to this problem. Argentina has a major commitment on humanitarian matters. More than 20 years ago, our While Helmets were recognized by the General Assembly for their valuable contributions. This issue is no exception. Last May, our White Helmets travelled to Lebanon to offer their assistance at a refugee camp for Syrians. Moreover, Argentina operates a humanitarian visa programme that facilitates the entry of persons affected by the Syrian conflict. We guarantee them residency permits and the same civil rights all Argentines have, so that they can have access to jobs and education for their children.

That is a task that has to be a team effort. It is with the help of all sector of society that we will be able to achieve genuinely inclusive and multifaceted development. We in Argentina count on the important support of the Lebanese and Syrian community, civil society organizations and religious institutions, all of which are assisting us in this process.

People do not become refugees by choice. They flee because their lives are in danger. They flee even knowing that they are at risk in doing so. Major changes happen step by step. That is why the United Nations gives us a horizon towards which to move forward, and why Argentina is determined to move towards it with determination. Members can count on our support today and always.

Co-Chair Lykketoft: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Abdusalam Hadliyeh Omer, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Somalia.

Mr. Omer (Somalia): It is a privilege and an honour to be here at this crucial high-level meeting.

Addressing the root causes of large movements of refugees is an absolute prioriy for us all, given the global situation. At the outset, let me pay tribute to the Government and the people of Kenya for hosting Somali refugees for nearly three decades at the Dadaab refugee camp. I had an opportunity to visit the camp earlier this year, along with His Excellency President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud of Somalia. I have never been so humbled or as determined to ensure that the root causes of large movements of refugees is addressed, both at home and abroad.

All of us should ask ourselves what makes a human being risk it all and leave the land they love. Essentially, that is what they do when they become refugees. Refugees leave behind not just their homes, property and families, but also their inner happiness, their dignity and the confidence of belonging. Most people will never understand what it means to be a refugee or what it feels like. I think it is important that we get to know refugees and listen to their stories to understand them better and appreciate their journey. In that way, we can create the most effective policies locally, nationlaly and internationally to assist.

Somalia has suffered nearly three decades of civil war, compounded by drought and famine, resulting in a huge displacement of populations inside and outside. Because of its stabilization efforts and good governance, the country has recently attracted many of its people to return home. Even migrants from the Yemen crisis have come to be in a safe place. In its recovery period — engendered by its own efforts internally by institutions, State-building and significant assistance from the international community — the return of the Somali diaspora has become a possibility.

Somalia is one of the biggest contributors to migration and refugee flows. Over 1 million live outside Somalia, while another 1 million live as internally displaced people. For that reason, Somalia agreed with its partner Kenya and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to find a durable solution for displaced people, in keeping with a tripartite agreement. That means that the process should safeguard the safety and dignity of returnees and take place in a humane manner. The Government of the Federal Republic of Somalia has decided to prepare a reintegration plan to cover the needs of 170,000 returnees in a phased manner and to seek funds for implementation in phases.

Finally, the Somali Government requests the international community to continue and increase its funding so that the Somali displaced population and other populations around the world find a durable solution to their problems, which will enhance peace and stability for Somalia.

Co-Chair Lykketoft: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. John F. Kerry, Secretary of State of the United States of America.

Mr. Kerry (United States of America): I want to applaud the United Nations for convening this very timely meeting on the large-scale movement of refugees and migrants. Obviously, we all come here convinced that there should be no question that we all need to do more in order to help people who are fleeing persecution and violence. The leaders' summit on refugees, to be hosted tomorrow by the Secretary-General, President Obama and the six partner Governments, is designed to complement and to reinforce the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1), which we adopted today, and to mobilize Governments everywhere to increase their efforts to cope with what has become a global humanitarian crisis, which in some places is a catastrophe.

Make no mistake: additional efforts are urgently needed. As we meet, an estimated 65 million people have been forcibly displaced from their homes, including more than 21 million people who have fled across international borders. It is in the world's singular interests, best interests, and it is right, to ensure that people who desperately need a new home, whether in or beyond the boundaries of their own country, can actually find a place to live in safety, with food, medicine, school and the time to plan for what comes next.

The task of providing such a refuge falls most heavily on those States that are directly embroiled in strife, on their neighbours and on the nations along nearby exit corridors. But the responsibility to assist is shared by all. We therefore have to do our part to try to end wars, to oppose violent extremism, to respect human rights and to support policies that humanely and effectively manage the flow of people who are on the move.

The key elements of those policies are well understood. Working with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), we have created norms that honour the rights of refugees. We have established rules for political asylum, voluntary repatriation, resettlement and local integration. We have reaffirmed the principle that impartial aid workers ought to be granted unfettered access to deliver emergency assistance to civilians who are trapped in areas of conflict. We may even, this afternoon, have heard about an incident in Syria that flies directly contrary to that right.

To improve our capabilities, the United States applauds the decision this year to make the International Organization for Migration — ably led by Bill

Swing — a part of the United Nations system. That step avoids the potential for duplication of effort and helps to concentrate funds where they will do the most good. We also call for the establishment of a special representative of the Secretary-General for internally displaced persons, recognizing that the vast majority of people who are driven from their homes are within their own countries. The plight of the internally displaced is not identical to that of international refugees, and it therefore requires special attention.

The world knows what it must do to respond effectively to the massive challenge that we face. But we have to apply the knowledge systematically and we need the resources to be able to do so before it is too late. As President Obama will make clear at the leaders' summit tomorrow, the gap between the funds that we have and the funds that we need remains enormous.

Today, the United States remains the world's largest donor of humanitarian assistance and refugee relief, and we are proud of that. But we would be even more satisfied if the need were ended. My country has now resettled more refugees through UNHCR's resettlement programme than all other nations combined. But we are far from satisfied about that too. On the contrary, we are determined to work with Members to create more opportunities for refugees, to provide more fully for the special needs of women, children and people in danger of persecution and to furnish additional help to countries that are on the front lines of humanitarian crises. To those ends, and more, we ask Members' support and we pledge our own continued best efforts.

Co-Chair Lykketoft: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Albert Koenders, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands.

Mr. Koenders (Netherlands): Over 65 million people today are either refugees or internally displaced — almost four times the population of my country. Although migration is natural, forced displacement certainly is not. It comes with deep human suffering, caused by the failure of nations to protect their citizens. Every single person in this room has a responsibility to eradicate the reasons to flee. Our responsibility is major, our responsibility is shared and our responsibility is immediate.

Our responsibility is major because too many people are forced to leave everything behind in exchange for an uncertain future. Too many people are still being exploited. Too many people are still risking their lives.

The Netherlands wishes to underline four priorities to address the crisis. First of all, root causes of forced displacement must be addressed, with conflict at the top. Secondly, vulnerable groups such as women and children deserve special attention and protection. Thirdly, migration should be made as regulated as possible. Fourthly, an effective global response requires effective action by the United Nations and each of its Members. The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) recognizes these priorities. The Netherlands is therefore happy to support it.

Our responsibility is also shared because the international community must offer security and protection to people in need. Let us be frank about it — we have not done so. Causes and solutions involve the full participation of all United Nations Member States, without exception. The Netherlands welcomes the recognition of that shared responsibility in today's Declaration. It provides a good basis for collective action. To be clear, each State is responsible for the well-being and safety of its citizens. That responsibility cannot be dodged; it cannot be outsourced to the international community. Likewise, countries that welcome refugees, such as the Netherlands, are responsible for their successful integration in society. Shared responsibility means that all countries do their part to bring down forced displacement and to manage its humanitarian consequences when it does occur. They must offer or support legal ways for resettlement and other forms of admission, and provide protection for the most vulnerable.

The Netherlands is shouldering its responsibility, in close cooperation with the European Union. We are working on broad partnerships on migration with countries of origin and transit, countries in Africa and countries neighbouring Syria. These are partnerships that recognize all interests, and we have to recognize all interests. They are based on an equal footing — otherwise they would not work. On behalf of the European Union's High Representative, earlier this year I discussed the outlines of a migration partnership with my colleagues in Mali, Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire. The agreements that we reached are proof of something that, in my view, is possible — a new partnership on migration. It is a proof of concept for the equal footing embodied in the Valletta approach.

Together, we are improving border control, we are acting against ruthless migrant smugglers who put vulnerable lives at risk and we are improving regulated

migration. Most importantly, together, we are giving people better prospects for a dignified life in their own country or region, as close as possible to their homes. To name just one example, the Netherlands is funding scholarships for 3,500 young Syrian refugees in their host countries in the region. Being able to study gives these refugees a chance for a better future in the societies that host them and, hopefully, in Syria.

Our responsibility is major and it is shared, but it is also immediate. The Netherlands will not wait until both global compacts are agreed on in 2018 because our responsibility will not wait. Suffering will not wait. Today's Declaration confirms and supports the efforts that we are already making, and it encourages all of us to step up those efforts. We must reverse the trends of ever-increasing numbers of refugees and internally displaced people. That is why I want to set a challenge for all of us today. We should do everything possible to cut that number of 65 million down by more than two thirds, to less than 20 million by 2030. I ask everyone gathered here to join me in this ambition. It is difficult for all of us — it is not easy — but I ask everyone to help achieve it.

Co-Chair Lykketoft: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia.

Mr. Dačić (Serbia): At the outset, I would like to thank the Presidents of the General Assembly at its seventieth and seventy-first sessions for co-hosting this very important meeting.

We are in the midst of a very serious refugee and migrant crisis, the largest such crisis since the end of Second World War — one that is not subsiding but is, on the contrary, intensifying in terms of scope and magnitude. Nine months after the decision was reached to convene this meeting, the situation has become even worse and more complex, with no comprehensive solution in sight. Despite serious efforts to address these and other growing challenges, the international community has failed, so far, to adopt an adequate approach to resolve the problem. It is clear that we need to find a solution for the main root causes of the crisis and to put an end to the wars and conflicts that have produced the largest number of refugees.

My country is located along one of the major routes for the movement of refugees, the Western Balkans route. Over the past year and a half, more than 700,000 refugees and migrants have transited through Serbia. We have demonstrated our solidarity and humanity, for which Serbia has frequently received praise not only from migrants themselves, but also from United Nations agencies and the international community. We have organized reception centres, accommodation and transport. We have provided food, clothing, health care and special care for women, girls and children, as well as for the sick and elderly.

Our empathy for refugees and migrants and our essential understanding of their suffering and predicament arise from the fact that we have faced the problem of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) for over two decades. Even today, our country is home to a total of 250,000 refugees and IDPs living in protracted displacement, the largest number in Europe. We have been making tremendous efforts to find durable, just solutions for refugees from the region and for IDPs in our territory who are living in protracted displacement. The reduction in the number of refugees in the territory of the former Yugoslavia was largely the result of their integration in the Republic of Serbia, which involved over 300,000 people. In that way, Serbia bore the largest burden of a durable solution for the refugee problem. Regrettably, out of 200,000 IDPs, only 4,000 — or 1.9 per cent of the people expelled 17 years ago from our province of Kosovo and Metohija — have returned to their homes.

The migrants coming to Serbia arrive from European Union (EU) countries and strive to reach northern EU members. When northern sections of the route are closed, there is a risk of Serbia becoming a bottleneck for several thousand migrants stranded in Serbia, which is already the case. Currently, there are more than 7,000 migrants and asylum-seekers in Serbia. In coordination with the neighbours along the Western Balkans route, we have undertaken measures to prevent irregular migration and to suppress the activities of criminal smuggling groups.

While the influx of refugees and migrants has somewhat decreased since March of this year, the Western Balkans route is far from closed, owing to the active involvement of criminal groups. We do not want to erect walls and we are ready to show solidarity and bear our share of the burden of the crisis. However, as a country that has been dealing with a problem of protracted displacement for more than 20 years, we do not have the capacity to be a long-term mass shelter for migrants. We therefore urge that we work to find a comprehensive European and global solution and a way

to share the burden equitably. The Republic of Serbia made a pledge at the London conference on Syria in February and has donated €500,000 to UNICEF for the education of children in Syria.

Today's adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) has put in place a political framework for addressing issues related to refugees and migrants. What we need now is to ensure that our jointly mobilized political will is translated into action. Serbia is ready to work with all Member States to implement the goals set out in the Declaration.

Co-Chair Lykketoft: Since no one is ready to speak, I shall suspend the meeting yet again.

The meeting was suspended at 3.40 p.m. and resumed at 3.50 p.m.

Co-Chair Lykketoft: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu, President of the Republic of Zambia.

President Lungu: At the outset, let me join others who have spoken before me to express gratitude to the Secretary-General for organizing this high-level meeting on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants. I am hopeful that this summit, the first of its kind, will indeed provide a unique opportunity for the global community to identify conditions that have exacerbated large movements of refugees and migrants in order to strengthen our collective response to these movements.

My Government considers the outcomes of the World Humanitarian Summit of May 2016 as critical to the ongoing efforts to improve humanitarian assistance, particularly the political commitments to end displacement, as well as to the need for humanitarian and development actors to work together and find ways of financing humanitarian and development activities. It is important for us to build on the key commitments of the Summit in order to address the gaps in humanitarian assistance for people in vulnerable situations.

My delegation welcomes the adoption of the outcome document of the high-level meeting (resolution 71/1), which, inter alia, emphasizes the need to provide host countries with support in key life-saving sectors, such as water and sanitation, nutrition, health care and shelter, including support to community-based development programmes. My Administration further aligns itself with the commitments outlined in the document with the conviction that these undertakings will go a long way in alleviating the suffering of the increasing numbers of people who are in most cases forced to leave their homes in search of safety due to conflict, war and climate change among other causes.

Zambia has been a long-standing home to refugees from neighbouring countries in the region, as well as from the Horn of Africa. Two years after gaining independence in 1966, the first refugee settlement was established in the western part of the country, followed by another in North-Western Province in 1971. At the peak of conflicts in southern Africa, Zambia hosted more than 300,000 refugees in six refugee settlements, four of which have since been closed. Between 2008 and 2015, more than 210,000 Angolan refugees were assisted in returning to their country. Today, about 23,000 former Angolan refugees have been fully integrated in the Zambian system, in addition to about 6,000 former Rwandan refugees.

Towards the end of 2011, my Government pledged to locally integrate 10,000 former Angolan refugees following the cessation of their refugee status. This durable solution was extended to 4,000 former Rwandan refugees who lost their status after the invoking of the cessation clause in 2013. I wish to report that we have made important strides in the integration of former Angolan refugees, with about 8,000 having been processed for the issuance of residence permits, which will accord the affected refugees the freedoms and rights closer to those enjoyed by Zambians.

My Government has also provided land for the resettlement of the former refugees for farming and other income-generating activities. Close to 2,000 plots of land, worth over $3 million, have been demarcated in resettlement schemes for allocation to former refugees and Zambians on a one-to-one basis. This is one way that, as a country, we believe we can ensure that former refugees and host communities live in harmony. We may extend the local integration programme to refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo who have lived in the country for more than 10 years in the same spirit.

Zambia has continued to welcome newly arrived refugees from eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi and Somalia who reside both in the camps and urban areas. Out of the total population of 52,419 refugees and former refugees currently in the country, 20,406 reside outside the settlements. This is despite Zambia's having made a reservation to Article

26 of the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees on freedom of movement. Further, we intend to relax the encampment policy by easing the processes for acquiring urban residency and authority to leave the camps while ensuring the maintenance of security for our people.

I wish to reaffirm my Government's commitment to maintaining an open-door policy for refugees with regard to access to employment and education. We will double our efforts to provide education to refugee children in the settlements in the knowledge that an educated refugee has better prospects than one who is not educated, whether or not they choose to return their country of origin.

To promote self-reliance, my Government has put in place measures for refugees to access work and engage in businesses of their choice. In collaboration with our partners, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, we have commissioned a study into the refugee economy, which will assist us in shaping policies on access to work and entrepreneurship. We are confident that these efforts will allow us to transform the widely held perception of a refugee as a burden to a realization that a refugee or migrant is an asset to a country in which they choose to live.

My delegation fully supports the proposed global compact on safe, regular and orderly migration and is hopeful that the consultative process leading to the adoption of the compact will be held in an inclusive and transparent manner. In the same vein, I wish to stress the need for the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to play a critical role in this process. Furthermore, Zambia welcomes the agreement between the United Nations and IOM, which is aimed at forging a closer legal and working relationship.

As I conclude, I wish to reaffirm Zambia's commitment to its international obligations arising from the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees as the foundation for the international refugee protection regime, including the core principle of non-refoulement. Under these instruments, Zambia takes seriously its responsibility to offer protection to those who seek asylum and will continue to play its role in assisting people affected by conflict, human rights violations and other threats to their well-being.

Co-Chair Lykketoft: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Rodolfo Nin Novoa, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Uruguay.

Mr. Nin Novoa (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): In our understanding of the migration phenomenon, we must understand in particular the causes or driving forces of migration and the displacement of populations, such as economic inequalities, poverty, environmental disasters, wars and conflicts and the specific characteristics of migrations associated with these causes.

Uruguay is aware of the alarming global migration and refugee crisis that has displaced over 65 million people worldwide and has resulted in over 21 million refugees. These are figures unprecedented in all of human history, and all States must act and respond accordingly. Today's meeting is an excellent opportunity to meet existing legal obligations and best practices, and to commit ourselves to the principle of shared responsibility while maintaining our vision of international solidarity and human dignity.

International migration is a key component in our country's history. It has had a significant demographic, social, cultural and economic impact. Over many decades Uruguay has hosted many people from diverse origins in search of broader horizons, and in many cases fleeing persecution, war, poverty or lack of opportunities. Starting in 2009, there was a change in migration trends marked by an increase in immigrants originating primarily in countries from the surrounding region. Uruguay became an attractive country for many people who decided to settle there temporarily or permanently, as they sought opportunities to improve their welfare and that of their families.

Uruguay has ratified and signed the most important international agreements, conventions and treaties regarding migration and the protection of human rights, and has development a normative national framework based on the recognition of and strict adherence to the rights of migrants and their family members. That national framework, along with the precepts enshrined in our country's Constitution, lays out the foundations and principles that define our national migration policy.

In the past decade, Uruguay developed a public migration policy, rooted in the protection and promotion of human rights, that has placed the country at the vanguard of the region and the world, as has been recognized in several international forums. The

principles driving our policy are equal treatment and enjoyment of rights between nationals and foreigners, nondiscrimination, sociocultural integration, respect for cultural diversity and identity, gender equality and the full protection of the most vulnerable migrant groups.

Uruguay also fully recognizes the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the subsequent 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees. At the national level, our country is a party to a series of legal instruments in that arena, notably the 1984 Cartagena Declaration on Refugees, recognized by the Organization of American States and the United Nations as a model of best practices, as well as the 1994 San José Declaration on Refugees and Displaced Persons, which urges Governments to harmonize rules, procedures and requirements as they relate to refugees. Our commitment is evidenced by ongoing national efforts to implement the 2004 Mexico Declaration and Plan of Action to Strengthen the International Protection of Refugees in Latin America and the 2014 Brazil Declaration and Plan of Action, which broadened the definition of the term "refugee", to the benefit of hundreds of people who sought refuge in Uruguay in recent years.

Uruguay wishes to highlight the role played by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees as the main systematic driver of global policies regarding refugees. Nevertheless, more international resources are needed to support the countries that host significant flows of refugees, as well as the countries of origin. In that regard, our country has doubled its voluntary quota for 2015 and 2016. We believe that innovative and sustainable solutions are needed. Successful traditional responses can serve as a foundation, but we must take measures that are truly adapted to the current migration and massive displacement phenomenon.

Policies should be based on a positive outlook of migrants as a basis for our well-being and development, one which values their economic, demographic, social, cultural and political contributions to both their countries of origin and host countries, as they enrich the host country with different perspectives and talents, and should preserve the principle of safeguarding their independence and promoting their self-sufficiency.

In addition, we must avoid restrictive State or refugee institute policies and migration management strategies that could endanger vulnerable migrants or refugees and their families. Any solution must incorporate the principles of equality and non-discrimination regarding those vulnerable groups in order to avoid making them victims twice over. As an case in point, it has been brought to my attention that many of the refugee or migrant women, boys and girls are frequently victims of human trafficking and sexual exploitation.

In that regard, Uruguay's migration policy — a comprehensive strategy, in keeping with Target 10.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development — seeks to adjust our mechanisms and instruments with a view to promoting orderly, safe, regular and informed migration and movement in an attempt to strike the appropriate balance between the rights of migrants and the State's security needs.

We also recognize the right to migrate, to return and to voluntarily remain in the country of residence, as well as the positive link between migration and development. These principles should go hand in hand with concrete action that will underscore the contribution of migrants. However, above all, we must ensure that migrants and migration are not criminalized, and that the rights of migrants be recognized and upheld in their countries of origin, transit and destination. We must debunk speeches that use disinformation and spread myths about migrants, as they feed xenophobia, racism and discrimination.

Our commitment towards refugees not only consists in allowing them to enter our country and respecting the principle of non-refoulement, but also involves the State developing a comprehensive plan that will ensure that the basic needs of refugees can be met and that they, in turn, can progress and adapt to their new surroundings. Encouraging refugees' and migrants' participation in the labour market is fundamental, not only to promote their personal development but also to contribute to the country's economic growth.

Uruguay believes we must solve and eradicate the problem of stateless persons, once and for all. We are working to do just that. We need robust national laws based on the relevant international conventions in order to address the vulnerability of those people, which in many cases causes and is a possible consequence of displacement. Human rights, fundamental freedoms and respect for human dignity must be promoted and

protected by States, independently of immigration status.

Mr. Tozaka (Solomon Islands), Acting Co-Chair, took the Chair.

In that connection, as Uruguay has promoted in its foreign policy and international cooperation, intergovernmental coordination is necessary to develop more effective and responsible collective responses, as is setting up comprehensive mechanisms for the prevention, care and protection of migrants, especially vulnerable groups among them, such as victims of human smuggling and trafficking; separated or unaccompanied children, girls and adolescents; victims of gender violence; and asylum-seekers and refugees.

The State of Uruguay shares the concern of the United Nations regarding the need for Member States to work more closely together and in a more coordinated fashion in universal forums such as the General Assembly; and to share responsibilities on a more equitable basis which will certainly help us to find, and come to an agreement on, our responses.

The meeting rose at 4 p.m.

United Nations A/71/PV.5 B

General Assembly

Seventy-first session

Official Records

5th plenary meeting
Monday, 19 September 2016, 12.30 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Thomson ..... (Fiji)

In the absence of the Co-Chair, Mr. Sogavare (Solomon Islands), Acting Co-Chair, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 1.05 p.m.

High-level plenary meeting on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants

Agenda items 13 and 117 (*continued*)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on His Excellency Mr. René Emmanuel Sadi, Minister of Territorial Administration and Decentralization of Cameroon.

Mr. Sadi (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the President of the Republic of Cameroon, His Excellency Mr. Paul Biya, I would like at the outset to express appreciation for the decision taken by the General Assembly to convene this high-level meeting on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants.

We should recall that this meeting follows up on the World Humanitarian Summit, held in Istanbul in May, which expressed the necessity of finding appropriate solutions to the problem of refugees and migrants. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, in the year 2014, nearly 14 million persons were refugees, half of them children and adolescents, with 86 per cent hosted in developing countries. Therefore, it is quite important to address this issue.

The question of refugees has drawn contradictory reactions. On the one hand, the original reason that those people fled has obviously been received with sincere compassion; on the other, the massive flow has also provoked anxiety and misgivings. As a result, certain policies have been set out and borders have been closed, and civilian detention camps have grown. At times, those people have been considered to be economic migrants and continue to be the object of negative judgments. And at times, they have been perceived as competitors for jobs or as a common threat to security. Those reactions undoubtedly arise from economic difficulties or the security situation in the host or transit countries. This meeting surely and opportunely marks a turning point as we consider the issue of the management of international migration flows.

At the same time, it also offers us an opportunity to ask ourselves a basic question about refugees and migrants. Are they not two facets of the same reality? The first group are often victims of conflict, while the other group is fleeing poverty or oppression. However, both groups are part of the same humanity; should they not, therefore, benefit from the same rights and guarantees under the Charter of the United Nations?

Cameroon is well aware of the issue. For more than three years, we have been subjected to the aggression of the terrorist organization Boko Haram and political crises in neighbouring countries. Cameroon has hosted approximately 350,000 refugees and migrants. Given

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our geographical location, our stability and, to some extent, our development level, Cameroon serves as both a host and a transit country. In our country, there is a tradition that offers foreigners an open and tolerant sociocultural environment. As we face the massive inflow of refugees and migrants, the Government of Cameroon has undertaken measures to address their basic needs.

In a spirit of spontaneous solidarity, our population mobilized to make a contribution that garnered considerable and much-appreciated support from friendly countries and international humanitarian organizations, such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Every effort is being made to assist the thousands of people in distress. In particular, considerable efforts are being focused on people's security, food and health, as well as on the education of the many children who live in approximately 10 refugee camps.

Substantial efforts are being made, but considerable needs must still be met. With support from our partners, including the United Nations, a response plan for 2016 was developed and budgeted at $282 million; however, only 20 per cent of that amount has been raised thus far. We therefore call on the international community to support host countries such as Cameroon, which has continued to provide shelter to people in distress and must juggle the required humanitarian action and the implementation of a bold development plan.

With regard to the Sustainable Development Goals, my country has committed to cooperating at the international level so as to facilitate migration and safe, orderly, regular and responsible mobility. In that spirit, we expect that closer relations between the International Organization for Migration and the United Nations will assist in implementing coordinated policies so as to bring humane solutions to the problem of migration. As long as internal or external conflicts persist, as long as underdevelopment forces people to remain in unpredictable conditions and solutions are not forthcoming to stem the effects of climate change, it will be difficult to dissuade people from fleeing violence and poverty and from taking immeasurable risks to find asylum and a better life elsewhere.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Guillaume Long, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility of Ecuador.

Mr. Long (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): Ecuador welcomes the initiative of the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner for Refugees to promote forums for dialogue and action on the pressing issue of large movements of refugees and migrants in the world. As the testimonies we have heard today prove, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of forced displacements throughout the world. Likewise, we have seen that some countries — namely, those in the North — are reluctant to host migrants or refugees.

Because it is a global phenomenon, we must reflect on the systemic causes of the current crisis. Human mobility is the result of a deeply unjust system of relations that reflects major imbalances and inequalities pertaining to the distribution of wealth and power. We live in a world that promotes the free flow of capital and goods but prohibits and criminalizes the free movement of human beings. The current situation, in which the countries of the North put up physical and even symbolic walls and the countries of the South pile up the dead, must be brought to an end. We could continue discussing the solutions that countries should devise to improve the current situation, but if we do not address the root, structural causes of the many injustices of today's world, we will be unable to bring lasting solutions to the situation.

We are very familiar with migrant and refugee issues in Ecuador. The crisis at the end of the 1990s, which led to what we referred to as a "bank holiday" in our country, led to thousands losing their savings and to more than 700,000 Ecuadorians leaving the country. Today, more than 3 million still live abroad. Within the diaspora, many were and continue to be victims of illegal human trafficking networks, and in both their transit and destination countries, they suffer discrimination, racism, exclusion, exploitation — in sum, human rights violations. That type of migration resulted in a deep political awareness and, in 2008, the year that our new Constitution was drafted, the Ecuadorian people decided that our Constitution would acknowledge human mobility as a right and include universal citizenship as a fundamental principle.

Of course, our foreign policy is focused on the protection of human rights of our fellow countrymen and women abroad. Our migrants are considered to be what we refer to as the fifth region in our country and contribute through their ongoing political participation through representatives in our National Assembly. Our legislative Assembly has six seats for representatives

of the migrant diaspora, and those residing abroad have the right to vote. We also worked to assist our fellow nationals who fell victim to mortgage scams at the height of the economic crisis in Europe and families that have lost custody of their children for socioeconomic reasons.

We are delighted to attend today's meeting in the special context in which the longest-running armed conflict in our region has come to an end. Peace illuminates a path for future progress and well-being for the Colombian people and for Ecuador. Of the countries in the Latin American and Caribbean region, Ecuador has the highest number of refugees. In recent years, we have granted refugee status to more than 60,000 people, 95 per cent of whom are Colombian. In our country, no one is housed in ghettos, camps with barbed-wire fences or in refugee camps. Refugees fully enjoy all of their human rights.

Another important battle is the fight against politically motivated discrimination against migrants. The 1966 United States' Cuban Adjustment Act and the 1990s Wet Foot-Dry Foot policy are examples of how the immigration laws of one country are used to affect the sovereignty of another and create unacceptable discrimination in our hemisphere. While the United States deports 1,200 Ecuadorians each year, it encourages migrants from Cuba to take risks as they pass through our country and others.

A few weeks ago, nine Foreign Ministers from our region submitted a letter to our counterpart in the United States to request that the policies against Cuba, such as the Wet Foot-Dry Foot policy, be withdrawn. Such policies have resulted in large illegal movements of Cuban citizens making their way towards Central and South America, causing a serious humanitarian crisis in the region and in our countries and violating the safety and integrity of the Cuban migrants themselves. We are still awaiting response.

I hope that today's meeting and the documents adopted will fuel those efforts, leading to the resolve of all countries to work together determinedly and in solidarity on behalf of displaced persons.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on Her Excellency Ms. Aurelia Frick, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Education and Cultural Affairs of the Principality of Liechtenstein.

Ms. Frick (Liechtenstein): The world is currently facing the largest movement of refugees and migrants since the Second World War. That has resulted in the record number of 65 million displaced persons throughout the world. People have to leave their homes because of conflicts, natural disasters, climate change, lack of economic perspectives, persecution and many other reasons. Grave violations of international humanitarian law, human rights and fundamental freedoms persist, owing to the inaction of the international community, and create new situations leading to mass displacement. We have to change something.

Liechtenstein is actively engaged in various areas, seeking to mitigate the suffering of today's refugees and migrants and to prevent other crises from erupting. One of our priorities is combatting impunity for human rights violations and violations of international humanitarian law. Holding perpetrators accountable for their crimes not only brings justice to their victims, it also has a deterrent effect. In situations in which mass atrocities have occurred, accountability becomes particularly important. A person who commits a single murder is often more likely to be punished for that crime than a person who commits 1,000 murders. We are looking for stronger action to ensure accountability for mass atrocity crimes, in particular from the Security Council, which also has the authority to end and prevent such crimes.

I therefore invite every Member State that has yet to do so to join the code of conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, elaborated in the framework of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group. The intent of that political commitment is straightforward: to take action to prevent or end atrocity crimes and not to vote against credible draft resolutions to the same end. So far, 112 countries have joined, representing more than half of the Member States. We view support of the code of conduct as a prerequisite for membership in the Council.

Liechtenstein is currently contributing $65 per capita for international refugee and migration assistance. In the context of the conflict in Syria, we have provided an additional 2 million Swiss francs for projects in Syria's neighbouring countries. Since 2012, approximately 20,000 refugees and local children have been able to benefit from Liechtenstein's school projects in Jordan and Lebanon. International solidarity has a long tradition in Liechtenstein. We

offered a large number of refugees protection during the armed conflicts following the breakup of the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s.

Today, we are undertaking a similar effort for those displaced by the Syrian conflict and other crises in order to help alleviate the burden on Syria's neighbours in particular. Liechtenstein has decided to participate in the resettlement programme of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, as well as the European Union's relocation scheme. When receiving asylum seekers, we pay particular attention to their speedy integration. Our newest initiative, Liechtenstein Languages, focuses on teaching the basics of the German language in just a few weeks. That allows refugees to quickly start interacting with locals and public offices, which has the effect of decreasing xenophobia.

We are trying to focus our humanitarian and development aid on long-term initiatives. Education, as I have mentioned in the context of Syrian refugee camps, is part of that approach. Other areas include the building of sustainable institutions, anti-corruption initiatives and women's empowerment. All of those issues can be found in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Agenda reads like a manual for avoiding mass displacements, and we must treat it as such if we are serious about avoiding future large movements of migrants and refugees.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Péter Szijjártó, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary.

Mr. Szijjártó (Hungary): First of all, I would like to make clear, on behalf of Hungary, that we welcome the fact that the United Nations is dealing with the issue of migration. It is necessary to find a balanced approach to the issue, and, instead of emotionally led debates, our debate should be based on common sense and rationality.

We have to admit that migration is largely a security issue. Taking into consideration the size and dimension of the migratory flows throughout the world, I think that there would be no debate about the fact that what we have been facing is a global security threat.

If that is so, we have to avoid hypocrisy and avoid bashing and accusing one another. We have to make a clear distinction between migrants and refugees, as has been correctly expressed in the title of today's meeting. We propose to stand on the very stable basis of international law, because it is clear that the right to a safe life is a fundamental human right. But choosing a country in which you would like to live is not among the fundamental human rights. I come from Europe and Hungary, a country that was overrun by 400,000 illegal migrants last year, attacking our police, violating our borders and breaking our laws. Based on our experience, I would like, therefore, to make six points here. These points are conclusions drawn from our experiences.

First, we have to tackle the root causes, and we have to help where the problems arise and where help is needed, because, in our view, we have to make it possible for people to stay as close to their homes as possible. We have to stop policies that encourage people to risk their lives by taking to the road.

Secondly, this year we have witnessed a migration without any kind of control, regulation or checks, equalling a mass violation of State borders. Such a mass violation entails a huge security risk, because uncontrolled and unregulated migration offers an opportunity for terrorist organizations to send their fighters out on various paths. In Europe, we find ourselves having to face the most serious security and terrorist threats ever seen.

That brings me to my third point, namely, that countries, States and Governments are responsible for providing security to their own citizens. That is why we have to avoid bashing countries that take the necessary steps to protect their own borders, because protecting one's border is a matter of sovereignty. And here I would like to draw a red line, namely, that there is no excuse for violating a State border between two safe countries. There is no excuse for doing so.

Fourthly, as we have experienced, 90 per cent of the migrants who entered the territory of Europe last year were actually victims of human traffickers. That is why we have to strengthen the fight against organizations of traffickers, and we have to consider that if we put too much emphasis on resettlement, that can encourage people to take to the road, which can help traffickers as well.

Fifthly, developments in northern Africa and in the Middle East have shown that the export of democracy can be very harmful and can lead to destabilization. When we make decisions with regard to international politics, we have to understand that there are differences with regard to culture and tradition. That is why we

have to be really careful, and we have to ensure that countries in vulnerable regions remain stable. We should avoid the export of democracy.

Sixthly, in order to avoid further escalation and the outbreak of crises around Europe and the globe, we have to strengthen preventive diplomacy in the framework of the United Nations. That is why Hungary is committed to contributing even more so as to strengthen that pillar of the United Nations.

Once again, I would like to underline that it is very positive that we have today put this item on the agenda of the United Nations.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Jean-Marc Ayrault, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Development of France.

Mr. Ayrault (France) (*spoke in French*): On every continent, migration has been part of the history of humankind. It contributes to the diversity and enrichment of people and the interchange of peoples and cultures. In the face of the mounting fears, which are undermining our political systems, societies and unity, it is our responsibility to recall the fact that refugees need, above all, protection and that they are women and men, like all of us, to whom we owe fraternity and solidarity. Given the temptation to retreat, we must not underestimate the power of our voices. Let our voices ring out together loud and clear.

We are gathered here today to strengthen the response to the largest refugee and displaced person crisis that the world has seen since the Second World War. More than 65 million men, women and children have been thrown out on the street, reduced to the status of fugitives, exiles and uprooted people. Sixty-five million people is the same as the population of France.

It is undoubtedly in Syria that the situation is the most tragic and the most destabilizing, especially for the neighbouring countries. There are more than 300,000 dead, more than 10 million refugees and displaced persons, more than 1 million in Lebanon, more than 600,000 in Jordan and 2.5 million in Turkey. Given that situation, honesty obliges us to acknowledge that our collective response so far has not risen to the occasion.

In the face of such individual and collective tragedies, it is above all the responsibility of the States from which the migrants are fleeing to set up conditions for their return. However, we too can contribute to restoring migrants' hope. We can provide them with a means to build new lives. We can educate the generation of those who are Syria and will constitute the Syria of tomorrow. No, it is not too late to do that.

Our responsibility is tremendous. We must host the exiled persons in dignity and with respect for international law. We must not only not close our doors to them, but we must also assist the countries that bear a disproportionate burden of the demands of solidarity, a duty that is incumbent upon all of us but to which we have not all responded equally. Again, I am thinking of Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey, but also of the people of the countries in the Lake Chad Basin who are hosting the victims of Boko Haram and still many others.

We cannot simply respond. We need to throw all our weight behind facilitating their return. The refugee and migrant crisis has its origins in persecutions, conflicts, climate change and poverty. Those events do not constitute a fate to which we must resign ourselves. It is not just a matter of preventing persons who wish to leave their country from doing so. That would go against international law and, in our view, an open world. We need to offer them an alternative to setting out on the perilous migratory routes with despair as their only motivation.

In Syria our assistance will be in vain if the systematic and barbaric violence against civilians does not stop. Our efforts will be in vain if they continue to be blocked by obstacles to humanitarian assistance, which is an international obligation.

In the face of this global refugee crisis, France is assuming its responsibilities by contributing financially. First of all, besides its contributions to the European effort, France will allocate overall more than €1 billion between 2016 and 2018 to address the Syrian crisis, beyond the additional €100 million mobilized in 2015 to support humanitarian agencies, which was already a doubling of our support as compared to 2014. An amount of €200 million will be allocated over three years for urgent humanitarian assistance, education and vocational training, largely in Lebanon. France will also allocate almost €1 billion to assist Jordan.

We must not forget Africa. France supported the establishment of a new European fund to prevent irregular migration and forced displacement. We plan to invest €20 billion over five years to benefit the poorest African countries, because without development all of the loftiest programmes for preventing irregular migration will amount to nothing. Finally, we need

to support the main host countries of inter-African migration, which has historically served as a lever for growth on the continent. I am thinking mainly of Côte d'Ivoire. Thanks to our support, Africa will more easily absorb the population growth that it will face in coming decades.

France also contributes to the hosting of refugees. In 2015, more than 80,000 people submitted applications for asylum in France. That is 20 per cent more applications than in the previous year, and they were mostly submitted by Syrians. Of the asylum seekers from Syria, 97 per cent were granted refugee status. Furthermore, France is committed to welcoming more than 30,000 refugees from countries that neighbour Syria who are being relocated from other European countries. These are voluntary commitments, but we must quickly step up our efforts.

Lastly, the key is what we can do together in New York in the Security Council to contribute to the settlement of conflicts, which cause distress for all our brothers and sisters who are forced into exile.

We need to wage this struggle together at the financial level as well, by allocating more resources to the strengthening of hosting capacities. We must all take part in that effort fairly in order to ease the burden imposed on the neighbouring countries and so that the right to asylum, which is a fundamental right, remains a reality. Politically, we need to tackle head on the deep-seated causes of migration by reaffirming universal values, which are ultimately the values of diversity and openness and which lie at the heart of the Charter of the United Nations.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Abdallah Albert Toikeusse Mabri, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cote d'Ivoire.

Mr. Mabri (Cote d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): The world has, in recent years, faced unprecedented flows of migrants and refugees. The origins of those large-scale displacements are at the same time political, economic, security-related, social, environmental and, at times, cultural. They reflect the feeling of despair felt by the millions of people forced to flee their countries for a future that is at times uncertain. They challenge their traditional lifestyles and sometimes shake up the cultural and social horizons that they face. Such large-scale displacements undermine the response capacities of the countries of destination and, unfortunately, at times arouse negative feelings of discrimination, xenophobia or racism among the population of those host countries.

In the face of that situation, Côte d'Ivoire — which has on its soil a population that is 24 per cent foreign-born, according to the recent 2014 census — therefore welcomes the holding of this high-level meeting on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants. We would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone of our common duty to stand in solidarity with those people, in accordance with international legal instruments on refugees and displaced persons.

Côte d'Ivoire is fully aware of the fact that the scale of the phenomenon of population displacements in recent years requires all countries to put forward a comprehensive, concerted and harmonized response so as to tackle the many challenges arising from such migrations. Indeed, no State alone can manage the phenomenon of population displacements. Neighbouring countries, transit countries and developing countries are affected. Some developing countries are particularly affected. Heavy demands have been put on their capacity to host people and on their public services, with tangible consequences for their own development and socioeconomic cohesion. Those countries need our support through greater international cooperation.

Our initiatives to surmount the challenges raised by mass displacements will be effective only if we tackle the root causes behind such unprecedented movements of people. We need, therefore, to strengthen our preventive diplomacy mechanisms at the regional and international levels so as to prevent conflicts, promote a peaceful settlement of disputes and consolidate peace. We especially need to promote the rule of law and respect for human rights. It is especially important for us to strengthen international cooperation to help the countries of origin to more effectively combat poverty, exclusion and the marginalization of certain populations. Here, there will be a need to promote fairness and social justice and to combat illicit capital flows, but also, and especially, to regulate the exploitation of natural resources so that they first benefit the interests of the most vulnerable populations.

The magnitude of the challenges posed by the mass displacements of populations requires a response from all stakeholders: States, private stakeholders, organizations for the management of migrants and refugees, and civil society. It is only together that we

can surmount the new challenges facing our world. It is together that we can open up new opportunities for hope for all vulnerable people. I hope that the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1), which has been adopted as the outcome of this meeting, will take all of those concerns into account.

The Acting Co-Chair: The General Assembly will now hear a statement by His Excellency Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan.

Mr. Abe (Japan) (*spoke in Japanese; interpretation provided by the delegation*): The world is facing a serious humanitarian crisis with movements of refugees and migrants of an unprecedented magnitude. I heartily welcome the holding of this first United Nations high-level meeting to address large movements of refugees and migrants, with the participation of all Member States. The crisis that we are facing is enormous and requires close coordination, involving all of the nations and organizations concerned.

To that end, at the Group of Seven (G-7) Ise-Shima Summit held in May this year, a leaders' declaration was issued that emphasized the importance of medium- to long-term efforts to assist refugees and migrants. I endorse the United Nations leadership in tackling this issue. I expect that all United Nations agencies will be united as one United Nations under the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrations (resolution 71/1), which was adopted today. I also welcome the fact that an agreement has been reached to accept the International Organization for Migration, which has contributed greatly on this issue, as a United Nations agency.

As the current Chair of the G-7 and a country that champions the notion of human security, Japan has made a proactive contribution to the issue of refugees. The Japan International Cooperation Agency, as Japan's international aid organization, has rendered assistance to the communities hosting Syrian refugees in various parts of the world, such as Turkey and Jordan. Japanese non-governmental organizations are also working hard in cooperation with local people. Furthermore, Japan is coordinating closely with the United Nations agencies, and many Japanese officials are actively engaged.

A characteristic of Japan's assistance is the promotion of development assistance to help refugees stand on their own feet and to support the economic development of the host countries in parallel with emergency humanitarian assistance. Let me provide an example.

In central Lebanon, in addition to humanitarian assistance, Japan is providing, in cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, vocational training to the Syrian refugees and young Lebanese. We have also partnered with the United Nations Development Programme in order to construct irrigation canals for agriculture. Such assistance has by now helped more than 30,000 people.

We call such an approach coordinated humanitarian development assistance. In a nutshell, that assistance is aimed at providing support from emergency assistance to economic development in a seamless way for both refugees and host communities. I hope that our approach can serve as a major force in achieving the objective of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants by enabling the coexistence between refugees and migrants and the host communities, as well as by protecting the safety and dignity of refugees and migrants.

May I conclude my remarks by making a new pledge? Japan will implement humanitarian assistance supporting self-reliance and supporting hosting countries and communities for refugees and migrants to the tune of $2.8 billion over a three-year period starting in 2016. Japan will continue to play a leading role in the quest to solve the issue of refugees and migrants, in close collaboration with the international community.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on Her Excellency Ms. Lilja Alfredsdottir, Minister for Foreign Affairs and External Trade of Iceland.

Ms. Alfredsdottir (Iceland): Human mobility is not in itself a bad thing. Far from it. As the Foreign Minister of Iceland, I stand here today because, 1,100 years ago, a group of Norse men and women embarked on a risky journey to seek a new life for themselves. Iceland, an island then completely unpopulated, became their new home.

Many people present here could share similar stories. Societies have benefited from the movement of people; indeed they have been formed because groups of people decided to move from one place to another. Today, we are witnessing migration on an unprecedented scale. Millions of people are on the move because they see no other alternative. They live in extreme poverty and lack access to basic needs, and they have been

forcibly displaced or they are fleeing war. The numbers speak for themselves — roughly 65 million people have been forcibly displaced, including 21 million refugees, 3 million asylum-seekers and over 40 million internally displaced persons.

We will be able to address the current trends in migration and lessen the suffering of those on the run from the scourge of war only if we address the root causes. I cannot stress that enough. Where inequality is the cause of displacements, we must also seek to increase equality. We must eradicate extreme poverty and work to ensure access to opportunity. At the same time, we must ensure an adequate and just framework for the movement of people, both in legal and practical terms. We will likely find that much of the movement we see is ultimately manageable, even beneficial to both individuals and societies. However, in order to help those fleeing under great duress now, the international community must do a much better job of addressing the underlying problems, most importantly climate change and war.

At the World Humanitarian Summit in May, a particular message was repeated over and over again: We must protect civilians in war and bring urgent relief to those suffering from conflict. We must demonstrate the political will to end conflicts, such as the one being fought in Syria. We cannot allow further escalation. The Security Council bears the heaviest responsibility for conflict prevention and for finding political solutions to ongoing conflicts. In my view, the Council needs to act more in unison, with more urgency and more concern for ordinary people.

I encourage everyone in this room to continue to support the international and humanitarian organizations assisting refugees in conflict areas and their neighbouring States. Iceland has, in 2016, provided $2.4 million to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for its Syria Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan and the 2016 UNHCR Syria Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan. We are preparing to receive Syrian refugees in cooperation with UNHCR's resettlement programme, adding to those that arrived earlier this year.

I would also like to underscore the importance of gender equality as a powerful and necessary lever for preventing and resolving conflict and for making peace sustainable. First and foremost, women have the right to have a seat at the negotiating table equal to that of men. Let us keep that in mind as we move forward. It should not be an afterthought, secondary to other matters that may seem to some more pressing. On the contrary, working towards gender equality will help solve some of the problems that the world is faced with today and bring about a more humane world.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on Her Excellency Mrs. Neneh Macdouall-Gaye, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Gambia.

Mrs. Macdouall-Gaye (Gambia): The convening of this high-level meeting on migration is timely, if not long overdue, as we witness one of the greatest human tragedies since the United Nations was founded. Although migration has been part of our human evolution, with people moving in search of greener pastures, the situation today is mainly caused by wars, civil strife and environmental hazards. Millions in the Middle East, Africa and Asia have fled and continue to flee the killing fields in Syria, Iraq, Somalia and other hotspots where respect for the sanctity of life and human dignity have completely disappeared.

Let us look very closely at what has brought about those wars. It is the biggest irony of our time that in this age of political majority, economic miracles and technological transformation, we continue to experience global tragedies that emanate from political discord, ideological rivalries and rancour. Those are the man-made causes of the global migration and, indeed, the refugee crisis. We therefore welcome this timely meeting and the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1), as it propels the international community into taking collective action to alleviate the plight and suffering of migrants and refugees, and it underscores the need for the root cause of migration to be addressed.

The Islamic Republic of the Gambia, in declaring its support and sympathy for migrants and refugees, would like to express its appreciation to countries that have opened their borders and welcomed migrants and refugees, especially the most vulnerable, who are women, children and the disabled. Their kind actions should be applauded as exemplary humanitarian gestures.

In the same vein, we call on leaders in conflict zones from where the flows of migrants and refugees originate to show care and compassion by putting aside political and ideological rivalries in order to save their people from death and destruction. The massive flow of migrants and refugees can be stemmed or controlled

only when there is reconciliation, peace and stability in our countries.

The Government of the Islamic Republic of the Gambia subscribes to the belief that migrants and refugees, as human beings, have inalienable rights that must be respected and protected in order to safeguard their dignity and well-being. In considering the plight of migrants and refugees, we wish to urge this meeting to take into account the imperative of burden-sharing. The cost of processing and settling migrants and refugees is too great for any country to undertake single-handedly. We therefore urge rich and well-meaning nations to contribute generously to the global funding to assist refugees and migrants and facilitate the work of the United Nations agencies charged with the task of managing the migrant crisis.

As a parallel measure, humanitarian and development assistance should be increased and immediately given to countries that are hosting migrants and refugees. That will enable the host countries to provide a more efficient and effective system of processing without depleting their resources. We also urge this meeting to consider and promote the positive aspects of migration. Most migrants are professional people who can contribute to the economies of their host countries if their labour markets are receptive to them. Migrants can also bring diversity and can engender peaceful coexistence.

There is also the need to encourage the development of high-quality programmes for refugees that can ensure legal and rapid processing. Reception and settlement are essential to reduce, if not eliminate, their suffering, especially that of women and children. We appeal to host countries to develop national strategies and programmes that will help refugees and their dependents to live in safe havens in dignity, until a time when it is possible to organize their return and reintegration into their country of origin.

Our young people have no reason to take such a perilous journey except for the illusion that Europe is replete with gold and honey and that once they land on European soil they will become affluent overnight. They must reconsider such a dangerous mission. They are better off staying in their countries and seizing opportunities available to them to develop themselves. That would, of course, require awareness and sensitization and the creation of relevant youth policies and programmes and partnerships with international agencies to create more opportunities.

I will conclude by calling on this body to address the lucrative trade carried out by human traffickers. Those criminals must be stopped, if we are to bring an end to those perilous journeys. It is my hope that this high-level meeting will complement efforts being made to address and redress the plight and suffering of migrants and refuges and bring focus to our collective global action. The world needs peace and stability, as well as safety, for its citizens.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Pierrot Delienne, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Haiti.

Mr. Delienne (Haiti) (*spoke in French*): First I would like to warmly congratulate the President of the General Assembly for convening this meeting concerning the root causes of large movements of refugees and migrants. I am confident that his experience and ability bode well for our successful effort.

I should like also to commend the work done by the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, who has always devoted sustained attention to the effective management of movements of refugees and migrants and encouraged States to undertake expeditious measures to tackle this issue.

In the same vein, I welcome the decision of the United Nations leadership to ensure that this meeting includes the participation of representatives of the community of migrants and refugees, who are the spokespersons for the nearly 240 million people who have been affected by the complex and multidimensional phenomenon of displacement from their native land.

It is well known that migration is a global economic, political, cultural and social phenomenon. It assumes various forms based on the era, country and historical circumstances. Human beings have always felt the need to move, most often in order to address their most immediate material needs. Here we are talking about voluntary migration, but there is also forced and involuntary migration. For example, America, in its present form, is the result of both voluntary and forced migration. Indeed, Europeans, Africans and Asians, at various junctures in history and under various circumstances, arrived to populate the continent.

From 1960 on, a reverse migration movement began, with nationals from American States leaving

their countries of origin to travel to old European cities. There is also inter-American migration, characterized by the migration of natives of certain countries in the Americas to other countries in the Americas. From another standpoint, there is also intra-Caribbean migration, involving migrants from countries and States of the Caribbean region who move to other territories in the region and settle there in search of better living conditions.

Today, migration is taking place in all directions, from one region to another and from one continent to another, with specific features. The latest wave of migrants from the Mediterranean towards Western Europe shows that migration is actually a circular movement.

A vast migratory movement has specific political and economic causes. It is the particular political realities of a State or group of States in a geographical region and the socioeconomic aspects related to these realities that end up pushing people out, resulting in migration. These include hunger, war, the search for employment, political and religious conflicts, natural disasters such as hurricanes and earthquakes, professional training and university education. Alongside these push factors are also factors of attraction that encourage a country's nationals to leave home for other shores.

Today the world has indeed become a small village. New information and communications technologies bring people closer together in villages, States and communities everywhere. People are increasingly aware of the realities in a certain country and, accordingly, they are willing to embark on a migratory adventure, hoping to change their living conditions in the host countries. Such migrants, through their work and their bravery, contribute to the development at many levels of their countries of destination. Indeed, migration contributes to international understanding and enrichment among cultures and civilizations.

It is with great pleasure that I inform the Assembly that the Haitian Government last year crafted a guiding framework for migration policy for the 2015-2030 period. This document is based on respect for human rights and the implementation of appropriate measures to make migration an option, not a necessity at any cost. The Government of the Republic of Haiti is committed to delivering on the goals that are enshrined in this framework document.

Haiti — and we cannot state this often enough — is a country of immigration and emigration, like many other countries on the American continent. Initially this country was made up of the descendants of migrants from Europe and Africa, from migrations that took place in the Americas during the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Subsequently, in the late nineteenth century, Haiti received refugees and migrants, especially from the Middle East.

On the other hand, Haiti became one of the many countries of emigration in the early twentieth century, when many agricultural workers sought employment in sugar plantations in Cuba and the Dominican Republic. Haitian migration continues today in countries of the Caribbean, the United States, Canada, and Latin American countries.

Thus migration has become an overarching theme of Haitian foreign policy. The Government of the Republic of Haiti attaches particular importance to Haitian migration. The authorities are working strenuously to create living conditions favourable to remaining for people who are very attached to their country of origin and their culture. For that reason, it is important for the country to have greater resources and opportunities so as to implement its socioeconomic development programme.

In this regard, I would stress that the categorization of Haiti as one a Heavily Indebted Poor Countries is a heavy burden that deprives it of access to various sources of external financing. Given the low level of domestic resources and a significant drop in foreign contributions, the country is facing many new economic problems that undermine our political stability and thereby foster migration.

In this context, financing for development is urgent. The Government of the Republic of Haiti is endeavouring to solve this problem by increasing domestic revenue, mobilizing all potential flows of external assistance and increasing investment in the private, national and international sector. It would be even more beneficial if Haiti could gain swift access to international credit. More than ever before, Haiti needs the funds necessary to generate revenue and employment, which will have a multiplier effect, enhance growth and promote modernization of our country.

During previous high-level discussions on migration and development, it was recognized that migration contributes to the development of certain communities.

I support this idea. We should therefore encourage the contribution of the diaspora to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In countries of emigration such as Haiti, remittances from migrants eclipse official development assistance in terms of volume, hence the importance that our Government attaches to emigration and immigration.

In conclusion, I want to emphasize the fact that the Haitian Government supports the recommendation contained in the report of the Secretary-General on a global compact for safe, regular and orderly migration (A/70/59), and we wish to see it implemented by all States Members of the United Nations. I hope that the decisions taken during our work will contribute to improving the status of migrants in host countries and to ensuring respect for their rights.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on Her Excellency Ms. Jean Kalilani, Minister for Gender, Women, Children and Community Development of Malawi.

Ms. Kalilani (Malawi): Malawi considers the issue of refugees and the influx of migrants as an important aspect of the global response to ensure that all persons who come through our borders seeking solace from many problems in their countries of origin, including socioeconomic, political and humanitarian ones, are accorded all of the assistance that they deserve in order for them to enjoy their basic human rights.

My Government has therefore continued to ensure that refugees in Malawi have equal access to social services such as education, health care, humanitarian support and enjoyment of access to economic activities without any discrimination, while at the same time contributing effectively to our national needs as a sovereign State governed by the rule of law and international agreements.

At the outset, I must point out that, like in many other countries, in Malawi the issue of refugees and migrants is not a new phenomenon. As many are aware, in the 1970s and 1980s, my country hosted approximately 1.2 million refugees. However, all of them returned to their respective countries when it was deemed safe to do so. Although we have not seen a recurrence of such a peak in refugees to date, Malawi continues to host a total of 27,000 refugees and asylum-seekers today, from across our region and beyond. That has occurred because Malawi offers a peaceful environment in which refugees and migrants can enjoy the full human rights and fundamental freedoms to which they are entitled, in line with its laws and international conventions.

Mr. El Haycen (Mauritania), Acting Co-Chair, took the Chair.

We are cognizant of the influx of large numbers of persons migrating, specifically from Africa and the Middle East, to Europe, and from Latin America to North America, owing to dissatisfaction with the living conditions in their respective countries. We are also aware of the strain that those movements impose on the host countries. However, considering that those refugees and migrants are citizens of the world, who deserve the same dignity and honour as all other human beings, States Members of the United Nations have the obligation to act as their brother's keeper for the many people seeking improved living conditions.

I am fully aware of the challenges posed by the current situation. In the case of Malawi as a host country to refugees from other parts of Africa, those challenges have led, in extreme circumstances, to the degradation of our environment.

We recognize that the provisions spelled out in resolution 71/1 point, among other things, to the need to adhere to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and core international human rights treaties. As a matter of principle, we also encourage all Member States to address the real causes of migration in our countries and why people become refugees fleeing to other countries in the first place.

In conclusion, let me state that my Government is committed to supporting and accommodating refugees and lawful migrants in partnership with the assistance of the international community in order to ensure that they are fully accepted in our communities until they decide to voluntarily return to their countries of origin.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now call on her Excellency Ms. Makalé Camara, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Guineans Abroad of Guinea.

Ms. Camara (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, the Republic of Guinea would like to congratulate the President and the Secretary-General for taking the initiative to organize a meeting as important as the one that has brought us together today on the issue of refugees and migrants in the world. Guinea also thanks the facilitators, whose efforts have enabled the harmonization of delegations' views during

the various official consultations that led to the drafting of resolution 71/1.

This meeting is taking place at a troubling time, one punctuated by the dizzying rise in the number of refugees and migrants fleeing the agony of conflicts, persecutions, poverty, famine and the harmful effects of climate change. Rather than serving as a means for scoring political points, this meeting must offer an opportunity for the international community to find lasting solutions to mass displacements. In that vein, my delegation reiterates its adherence both to the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, known as the Kampala Convention, and to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol thereto.

Although the World Humanitarian Summit held in Istanbul demonstrated the collective will of the international community to address the humanitarian needs of refugees and migrants, their situation remains an ongoing problem. The Summit expressed the demand that we commit to repairing the root causes of displacement by reinforcing and implementing legal instruments and international cooperation. My delegation therefore welcomes the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1), which we adopted today.

The search for funding and the transparent management of humanitarian funds are necessary in addition to any affirmation of political will by representatives in this room. That will enable us to reinforce the resilience of host countries and the conditions for a safe return, including protection, autonomy and the lasting resettlement of refugees and migrants in their countries of origin. The increase in humanitarian funds must also enable prevention, including the financing of development projects intended for women and children, as well as national policies that would prevent massive displacement. Within that framework, my country has initiated numerous projects for the benefit of women and children, the implementation of which requires the support of our bilateral and multilateral partners, thereby creating jobs for youth and empowering women between now and 2030.

Human dignity and rights must guide our discussions with a view to eradicating intolerance, racism, xenophobia and other forms of cruel treatment to which refugees and migrants fall victim in host countries. Although international humanitarian law guarantees the international protection of refugees and migrants, thousands of such people are prone to becoming exploited and continue to be deprived of their most basic rights. That is the situation with regard to migrant workers and their families.

Added to the difficulties reflected in rosters and censuses and the precariousness of conditions in refugee camps is the alarming situation of children and women, who make up more than half the number of refugees and migrants in the world. In West Africa, there are hundreds of thousands of displaced persons and refugees in distress, especially in the Sahelo-Saharan band and in the Lake Chad region, owing to terrorist activities by Boko Haram and other jihadist groups.

The large-scale movements of refugees and migrants should be addressed not just as a scourge, but also as a contributor to the development of our countries when the responsibilities are shared appropriately. Education, job creation and social inclusion can not only curb mass displacement, but they also enable refugees and migrants to contribute to the socioeconomic development of the countries of origin and host countries. The remittances sent back to countries of origin by migrants and the workforce made up of working migrants in host countries can justify that. My delegation wishes to welcome the efforts to integrate and educate migrants and refugees which some States have undertaken.

Given the increase in the flows of migrants, we must strengthen the United Nations system by defining a new agreement with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), whose expertise and goodwill have been invaluable to the success of our actions for migrants and refugees. Accordingly, we welcome the agreement that was signed this morning between the United Nations and the IOM.

This is also the occasion to call for the protection of United Nations humanitarian personnel, in particular the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. We should also encourage States to sign, ratify and implement legal instruments for improved protection of refugees and migrants.

From 1990 to 2011, the Republic of Guinea welcomed more than 1 million refugees following civil wars, which have regrettably affected neighbouring

countries, especially Liberia, Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire. Through its policy for integration and the efforts of the High Commissioner for Refugees, many refugees have been granted Guinean nationality or have voluntarily returned to their country of origin. Today, Guinea has on its territory more than 4,000 refugees, who fully benefit from the hospitality and protection of the Guinean Government. This important experience of my country demonstrates its respect for international commitments and its awareness of the sharing of humankind.

In an attempt to prevent the causes of the large-scale displacement of refugees and migrants, the Government of Guinea is committed to strengthening the peaceful climate through respect for human rights and the rule of law. We have also strengthened the measures for protecting the environment and set out national humanitarian structures to respond to the needs of displaced persons.

The solution for these large-scale movements of refugees and migrants requires a joint effort based on genuine political will, cooperation and mutual assistance. In that regard, the Government of Guinea reiterates its strong willingness to continue to work with all States in order to contribute to ensuring peace and security in the world, without which no development solution is possible.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to convey its support for the conclusions and recommendations of this meeting.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to Her Excellency Ms. Frances Fitzgerald, Deputy Prime Minister of Ireland.

Ms. Fitzgerald (Ireland): We come together today to deal with arguably the biggest challenge the world has faced in this century: the relentless recurring long march across the globe of the dispossessed, the distraught and the destroyed. We know the many reasons, starting with poverty, hunger and climate change. These are driving the mass migration of peoples as much as, if not more than, conflict and violence. But conflict and violence, of course, also continue to be the primary causes of migration.

Indeed, we in Ireland understand from our own experience the forces that can push people to leave their homes for a very uncertain future. During the 1960s, the population of my country was less than half of what it had been in the early 1840s owing to mass emigration that began in response to famine and continued virtually unabated for over a century because of poverty and a lack of opportunity.

While we have a keen awareness of the cost to Ireland in terms of lost potential from this forced migration, we also understand the contributions that those who left and their descendants have made to the countries where they now live, as well as to their country of origin or ancestry. This massive, agonizing challenge demands that the international community work together constantly. We must be as relentless as the challenges that we face, and, even more importantly, we must be on our guard all day every day, lest the very scale of the problem turn our faces towards processes and numbers and away from people.

People must be at the heart of our approach. We must ensure a humane and dignified approach to international protection and must establish legal and safe pathways for migration. We must work together to ensure that refugees and migrants find safety and that adequate resources are made available to those we are obligated to protect in order to enable them to rebuild their lives.

Right now, the burden of hosting refugees is disproportionately borne by developing countries. A more equitable sharing of responsibilities is urgently needed. Ireland is willing to step up to the plate on this. Ireland's response to the current crisis has been two-pronged in nature, with action at both the national and international levels.

Ireland has had a successful national resettlement programme in place since 2000. It has resettled more than 1,500 people from 30 countries, providing housing, language training, medical assistance and integration opportunities. Turning specifically to our new refugee protection programme, under that programme, Ireland has committed to admitting 4,000 people. As part of our humanitarian response, our naval vessels have also been performing vital search-and-rescue missions in the Mediterranean Sea. They have rescued more than 10,000 people since the operation began in May 2015.

Our focus has also been on supporting international responses. We are strongly committed to using the foreign policy instruments at our disposal — political dialogue, development, cooperation and humanitarian assistance — as part of our response. We have for instance worked actively to provide support to the

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other agencies charged with meeting the needs of refugees.

Equally important is the support that we provide to countries hosting large numbers of refugees and migrants. Ireland is committed to providing multi-annual funding to the World Food Programme — some $60 million over the next three years, which is specifically targeted at refugees, particularly Syrian refugees. We encourage the international community to adopt multi-annual commitments in order to provide organizations such as the World Food Programme with greater certainty about their funding. The international community does have a collective responsibility to look at all of the options available to pursue a more long-term and sustainable strategy on this issue. Dialogue and cooperation with countries of origin and transit must be strengthened and operationalized.

Of course, fundamentally, the true solution to refugee movements is to end the instability, conflict and oppression that force people to leave their homelands. Women's leadership can help to alleviate conflicts that have contributed to so many of the refugees crises we face. Ireland is a strong supporter of the women and peace and security agenda because peace processes that involve women at all levels have proved to be more durable and successful.

Today's humanitarian challenge requires a global response. We must share the responsibility for finding and implementing solutions. Ireland believes that the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) sends a strong message of our political commitment to a wide range of actions, which taken together will ensure a more humane and compassionate response in future to this issue.

Ireland stands ready to play its part in addressing this crisis. We know that more needs to be done. We are open to seeing what can be done in cooperation with others to end the suffering and misery of so many people. I would like to congratulate Ireland's ambassador, Mr. David Donoghue, and his team, and their Jordanian colleagues, for their leadership and commitment as facilitators of this event.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to Her Excellency Ms. Liduvina Magarin, Vice-Minister for Salvadorans Abroad.

Ms. Magarin (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour for me to address the General Assembly on the occasion of this high-level plenary meeting organized to address movements of refugees and migrants in the world.

As we all know, migration has now become a matter of global interest that requires various approaches, solutions and cross-cutting responses in our daily efforts, which must be conducted at various levels — local, State and international. Accordingly, there needs to be a shared responsibility in the recognition of, respect for and protection of the human rights of the migrant and refugee populations, especially for boys, girls and adolescents. That should be done through international cooperation, in particular through the contribution and significant efforts among countries of origin, transit and destination.

It is essential that we recognize that migration has multiple causes. It cannot be explained or analysed based solely on data; there is never just one reason for it. That is why the issue must be examined in all its dimensions, with short-, medium- and long-term measures driven by all stakeholders involved in the issue. As we know, in the context of migration, many of those who migrate are in fact people who require international protection or asylum. The current mass movements of people challenge us to focus our attention on the human dimension of the situation. It is a question of persons, each with his or her own particular life story. We need to analyse the age, the sex, their motivations, their places of origin, transit and destination, and group affiliation, among other aspects, because it is not possible to have a one-size-fits-all solution.

Migratory flows do not represent in themselves a risk for countries of destination. On the contrary, there are many social, economic and cultural benefits and opportunities for those countries. For this reason, we must as States recognize our obligations for assistance and protection in compliance with international law and recognize the special needs of persons in vulnerable situations.

In this context, I should like to underscore the risks they run during their transit, particularly for women, girls and boys, and especially unaccompanied children or children separated from their families, who easily fall prey to human trafficking or abuse in the context of the smuggling of migrants. Therefore, migrants must be given a comprehensive support policy and protection

that fully respects and guarantees their rights. I must also underscore the need to create conditions in destination countries that favour the integration of migrant populations and ensure their rights to education, housing, work and health care.

It is also crucial to continually support strategies to prevent the smuggling and human trafficking of girls and adolescents. In that regard, the Government of El Salvador has also been contributing to duly addressing this situation, in addition to our work to meet the other challenges this issue demands of us. We have implemented policies for consular assistance to protect human rights and contributed to addressing extra-continental migration, such as in the case of Cubans who accumulated on either side of the border between Nicaragua and Costa Rica.

That brings us to reflect on the irregular migration in Central America's Northern Triangle region, which consists of Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador. A dialogue has begun, which Mexico and the United States, as countries of origin, transit and destination, have also joined, with a view to finding a joint solution, sharing responsibility and creating what we call the Alliance for Prosperity Plan in the Northern Triangle of Central America. El Salvador believes that a comprehensive approach to migration that looks at structural causes is the path by which to confront and resolve in a positive manner the challenges we are before us.

Based on the foregoing, I wish to reiterate that El Salvador is committed and stands ready to tackle this challenge. We express our willingness to contribute to this end and join in this common approach to address migration in a comprehensive manner and from a deeply human perspective.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Gerd Müller, Minister of Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany.

Mr. Müller (Germany) (*spoke in German, English interpretation provided by the delegation*): Over the last 10 years, the number of refugees across the world has almost doubled. The number of migrants has also nearly doubled, with 65 million across the globe, of whom 50 per cent are children and young people. War, violence, hunger and natural disasters force people to become refugees. A lack of opportunities and the possibility of a future also lead to migration flows.

I am grateful to the Secretary-General for sending out a clear message with this high-level plenary meeting. All of us bear responsibility for this situation. Nearly 90 per cent of refugees are currently located in 10 developing countries and emerging economies. They are in the poorest countries, and those countries have taken them in, which has demanded a massive amount of resources from the countries concerned. I saw that myself in South Sudan, Kenya, Ethiopia and other countries. On the other hand, 10 rich, industrialized countries are funding 80 per cent of the global refugee aid being distributed.

This high-level meeting must send out the message that this situation must change. There must be greater solidarity. The speeches delivered in this room must be translated into action. More countries must be involved in taking in refugees and more countries must provide financial support. Some $20 billion is required to meet the refugees' basic needs across the world. I know that is a large sum of money, but what is $20 billion for the international community? The World Cup in the desert country of Qatar will probably require an investment of approximately $200 billion. Yet so far only $8 billion has been made available worldwide for migrants and refugees, when $20 billion is needed. This is shameful; we should not be allowing this to happen.

The situation in Syria, Iraq and their neighbouring countries is particularly difficult. Stability is needed to help people survive and provide a future for the children in refugee accommodations. While $8 billion is needed, only $3.5 billion has been made available. For Syria, that represents only 45 per cent of the actual need. I attended the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul and am now at this high-level meeting here in New York. Only 45 per cent of the commitments made to support Syria have been delivered. I could read the list out loud to the Assembly. On one side we can see the commitments made in London. The other side shows either what has been provided or the empty promise that was made. That list is available on the website of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

What do we need? We need greater transparency, a monitoring system and the administration and implementation of the commitments made. Commitments must be translated into concrete projects. Payments must be verifiable and transparent for all. We need stability in the system, namely, more forward-looking planning and more prevention. UNICEF, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for

Refugees and the World Food Programme must be able to plan in advance.

We cannot return to a situation where funding is insufficient to provide food for babies in refugee camps. That is why we should together consider the question of establishing a United Nations refugee fund of €10 billion. We need global burden-sharing. In our refugee policy everybody bears responsibility. We support the Secretary-General and the proposals that have been made.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now call on Her Excellency Ms. Antoinette Dinga-Dzondo, Minister for Social Affairs, Humanitarian Action and Solidarity of the Republic of the Congo.

Ms. Dinga-Dzondo (Congo) (*spoke in French*): Managing large movements of refugees and migrants is one of the major challenges of our time. My delegation appreciates this high-level meeting, which provides us with the opportunity to make new commitments aimed at dealing with a phenomenon that spares no continent. According to statistics, to date a total of 17 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) exists worldwide. Africa has 12 million refugees and displaced persons and is therefore the greatest supplier of refugees and migrants. The number of IDPs is also steadily increasing.

As for my country, the Congo, it currently hosts 53,717 displaced persons, a majority of whom are refugees from neighbouring countries, including the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda. One can add to that number 6,004 asylum-seekers of all nationalities.

Migration contributes to bringing people together, as well as to countries' development efforts, and there is no longer any doubt that it should be safe, regular and orderly. A lasting solution for managing large movements of refugees and migrants is possible only through close cooperation among the countries of origin, transit and destination, with the support of United Nations system partners and agencies.

My country attaches great importance to the regular holding of tripartite meetings with the refugees' countries of origin and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The most recent such meeting was held on 8 and 9 September in Brazzaville and focused on the situation of Rwandan refugees living in the Republic of the Congo, in view of the entry into force of the termination clause of our refugee statute, which is set to expire on 31 December 2017. The parties agreed on the need for continued awareness of the various options that refugees are free to choose among, namely, voluntary repatriation, exemption and local integration.

In addition, the Congo is also a party to various international legal instruments on the promotion and protection of human rights. As such, it has adopted implementing regulations at the national level to ensure that refugees and migrants have access to basic social services, such as health, education, housing and employment, as part of their protection.

My delegation welcomes the adoption today of the outcome document on refugees and migrants (resolution 71/1). Through that text, the international community has once again recognized the urgent need to implement the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with a view to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in due time. The 2030 Agenda, whose Goals include the eradication of poverty and inequality, the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies, the establishment of conditions fostering an inclusive economy and the promotion of employment, invites us to respect the commitments made in the framework of providing assistance and protection to refugees and migrants.

I cannot conclude without reiterating the commitment of my country, the Congo, to continuing to promote and protect the rights of refugees and migrants as an integral part of the human rights platform.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Abdrahamane Sylla, Minister of Malians Abroad of Mali.

Mr. Sylla (Mali) (*spoke in French*): Allow me at the outset to bring the warm greetings of the President of the Republic of Mali, Mr. Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, who considers especially important the issue that we are addressing today with regard to the enormous challenges we are facing. He anticipates that the participants will carefully consider those challenges and seek ideal solutions to the issues at hand.

The delegation of Mali welcomes the choice of the theme, whose relevance is justified by the many challenges resulting from the current trends in international migration, their role in the evolving demographics and their inclusion in the Sustainable Development Goals in the framework of the 2030

Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development.

According to the statistics set out in the report of the Secretary-General on international migration and development, published in August (A/71/296), the number of international migrants reached 244 million in 2015, representing an increase of 71 million, or 41 per cent compared to 2000. The report also points out that today more than 40 million people are displaced within their own countries and that the number of refugees and asylum-seekers now exceeds 24 million.

In Mali, there are 500,000 internally displaced persons, and there are 150,000 refugees in neighbouring countries, owing to the crisis in the north of Mali, compounded by the occupation in 2012 of two thirds of the national territory by terrorist groups and narco-jihadist groups that subjected the local populations to all kinds of abuses and grave human rights violations.

During the World Humanitarian Summit, which was held in Istanbul in May 2016, the President of the Republic of Mali, His Excellency Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, undertook firm commitments to continue with humanitarian programmes and actions aimed at alleviating the suffering of the people of northern Mali. In that framework, a national humanitarian action policy document and an action plan for 2016–2020 have been drafted and implemented, and a national strategy for the management of internally displaced persons and repatriated persons has been adopted, spelling out guidelines and the measures to be taken to facilitate the return of displaced persons.

Four regional emergency intervention plans were developed in July 2015 for the northern regions, including Timbuktu, Gao, Kidal and Mopti, thanks to the national synergy and the support of partners including the International Organization for Migration, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

Sustainable solutions to the root causes of mass displacement must be adopted. Disaster risk reduction provisions, as set out in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, need to be urgently adopted. The Paris Agreement on Climate Change must be effectively and fully implemented. Collective resources must be harnessed to prevent armed conflicts and ensure that they are settled expeditiously and in a lasting way; and all forms of discrimination and inequality must be combated.

The challenges of migration, given their extreme complexity at the social, political and cultural levels, have become decisive factors in bilateral and multilateral relations. In this regard, the overall approach of my country, Mali, to managing migration hinges on stepping up dialogue among countries of origin, destination and transit so as to find suitable solutions that would link requirements in the area of security, development, respect for human dignity and ensuring solidarity. Migrations would then take place under humane and orderly conditions and benefit both migrants and the societies of the countries of origin and of destination. Furthermore, they would occur in a regular way, in safety and with full respect for human rights and the obligation to deal humanely with migrants, both regular and irregular, refugees and internally displaced persons.

Mali, which seeks to make migration an asset for its socioeconomic development, in September 2014 adopted a national migration policy document together with an action plan that sets forth a vision, guidelines and strategic pillars for the diaspora, migrants' associations, the Government and the people of Mali affected by migration issues. The aim of the policy is to better manage migration so as to contribute to reducing poverty and to sustainable development. This is an ambitious project based on two key pillars: management of migration as part of international standards, and the will to link migration and development.

Ultimately, implementation of this policy will contribute to building upon the efforts under way to create jobs for youth so as to prevent them from being tempted by irregular migration and from being recruited and indoctrinated by terrorist and narco-jihadist groups for criminal purposes, as has happened in some parts of northern Mali.

In conclusion, I should like to call upon the States Members of the United Nations to further commit themselves to the international normative framework relating to international migration, especially instruments to uphold the fundamental rights of all, including those aimed at promoting the rights of migrant labourers and their family members, protecting refugees and combating trafficking in migrants and in other human beings.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*) The Assembly will now hear an address by Her Excellency Ms. Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović, President of the Republic of Croatia.

President Grabar-Kitarović: I express my gratitude to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, relevant United Nations agencies and partner institutions and organizations for having developed concrete policy on this issue throughout the past year. The World Humanitarian Summit and the Agenda for Humanity served as a great contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and our collective pledge to leave no one behind.

Although Croatia, the European Union and our partners have made positive strides in developing strategies and solutions to curtail, finance and manage the migration crisis since last fall, the main problem remains unresolved. Therefore, I believe that today's summit is timely and significant for three reasons.

First, as our outcome document (resolution 71/1) clearly highlights, large movements of people are a global phenomenon that no Member State can shy away from. This is not just a European problem or a problem that is happening somewhere else, far from our sight. By now we should know that our world has no boundaries with respect to humanitarian and security issues.

Secondly, building upon this, we must realize that the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its Protocol may be supplemented by new milestones in the light of current facts and challenges. Today, as we adopt and discuss the summit's outcome document, it is important that we recommit ourselves to our global obligations, the importance of responsibility-sharing and the need for comprehensive responses.

The refugee issue remains a humanitarian one, but its scope and ramifications go far beyond this dimension. This global crisis also has ample political, economic, developmental, social, legal and human rights aspects. We do not need to minimize anyone's dignity or rights or the perils in which they find themselves. Instead, we have to address the root causes of people's predicaments.

This leads me to my third point: preventing and ending conflict, violence and persecution. Implementing the 2030 Agenda will address many of the root causes of migration. Conflict is just one of these causes, but it is perhaps the only one on which the global community can act in a timely manner to prevent and finally end it, through both soft and hard power.

The other causes — among them poverty, inequality, lack of opportunities, lack of education, climate change, failed States and deteriorating societies — will remain a long-term quest. For the time being, we need to focus on consistent implementation of legal admission and return policy and preventing the loss of life in migrants' dangerous journeys. We must achieve coordination and cooperation among all countries on the migration chain — origin, transit and destination countries — in order to promote safe, regular and orderly migration management.

We must increase global efforts in countering organized crime networks in human trafficking. Since last autumn, the European Union has in reality been supporting huge illegal industries of traffickers. Croatia spent about €20 million for assistance to migrants. Imagine how much more effectively this money could have been spent throughout the broader region by helping those in dire circumstances and by countering conflict, terrorism and violent extremism.

Today's summit and its outcomes are part of the new milestone in addressing the needs of the most vulnerable. We cannot argue against the principles that we want for our citizens in our own societies. Everyone should have the right to remain in their homes. Children and young people must not lose their rights to education and safety. Families should not be placed in situations where they have to leave someone behind. Individuals must not be put in a position of having to choose between their basic economic survival and their human rights. We must do everything to ensure that people never have to abandon their homes in search of safety. No one can financially repair or rebuild a life or a community that is forever lost to conflict.

The Acting Co-Chair *(spoke in French)*: I now call on His Excellency Mr. John McCallum, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship of Canada

Mr. McCallum (Canada): Migration has been a constant throughout human history, so it should be seen as a reality to be addressed rather than a problem to be solved. It presents both challenges and opportunities but remains a force for positive change, fostering inclusion, diversity, innovation and growth. On the subject of diversity, I might mention that our Prime Minister, Mr. Justin Trudeau, frequently says that Canada is strong not in spite of our diversity but

because of it, and for us, immigrants and refugees are the very embodiment of our diversity.

In order to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and leave no one behind, we need a comprehensive approach that focuses on the benefits of managed migration. Such an approach must be anchored in indivisible human rights that apply to all. It must also address the particular challenges faced by female refugees and migrants, by women and girls. It must recognize the important role of and enormous challenges faced by host countries. It must find equitable and comprehensive ways to share the global responsibility.

(*spoke in French*)

In order to achieve our objectives, we need a new partnership and innovative means for cooperation. That is why Canada is particularly pleased that the International Organization for Migration is now officially joining the United Nations family, so that it can share with us its vast experience and leadership in the area of international migration. Immigrants have enabled Canada to be a prosperous and dynamic country. They have expanded trade and investments, stimulated economic growth and cultural development, and insured that diversity was a great strength.

(*spoke in English*)

Around the world, migrants, including refugees, fill skill gaps and labour market shortages, address the challenges brought on by aging populations and improve understanding of other cultures. In Canada, refugees have done very well. Two of our former Governors General are refugees, and one of my cabinet colleagues, Maryam Monsef, who was a refugee from Afghanistan, is now our Minister of Democratic Institutions.

In formulating a cooperative approach to migrants and refugees, we must recognize their inherent dignity, and facilitating refugees' access to education and employment is a tangible expression of such an approach. We hear many voices around the world speaking with insecurity about others and with fear of those who are different from them. And yet many countries are hosting millions of refugees, often while dealing with already stretched resources. I know that well from recent visits to Jordan and Lebanon, where it is abundantly clear that those countries are bearing a huge burden in terms of all of the refugees.

(*spoke in French*)

And therefore, together we should work out a more balanced global vision and seek stronger collective efforts to address large movements of persons throughout the world. If we tackle this situation directly, we will be able to reduce irregular migration, protect refugees, combat the smuggling of illegal persons and provide opportunities for refugees and migrants.

(*spoke in English*)

Both the future global compact on refugees and the global compact on safe, regular and orderly migration should be about our countries working together on a framework that takes advantage of our collective strengths. Over the next two years, we will have a unique opportunity to shape those two agreements. It is a responsibility to help determine the world's ability to respond, innovate, cooperate and provide a better future for millions of people. It will also help our own countries benefit greatly from newcomers' contributions for many years to come.

(*spoke in French*)

These are rare opportunities, and we must take full advantage of them. Canada is offering all its support to those processes, and we wait impatiently for the adoption in 2018 of those two ambitious global compacts.

The meeting rose at 3.05 p.m.

United Nations A/71/PV.6 A

General Assembly

Official Records

Seventy-first session

6th plenary meeting
Monday, 19 September 2016, 4.30 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Thomson ..... (Fiji)

In the absence of the Co-Chair, Mr. Tozaka (Solomon Islands), Acting Co-Chair, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 4 p.m.

High-level plenary meeting on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants

Agenda items 13 and 117 (*continued*)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

The Acting Co-Chair: I call on His Excellency Mr. Lazăr Comănescu, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Romania

Mr. Comănescu (Romania): Migration is as old as human civilization, but today internal and cross-border migration has grown dramatically, and will continue to do so in our increasingly globalized world. With an unprecedented number of conflicts and crises worldwide, not to mention the perpetuation of numerous negative developments in other regions of the world, large-scale mixed migratory flows are becoming a frequent phenomenon. There are also new trends emerging, such as the increase in environmental problems associated with climate change and natural disasters.

People's reasons for moving differ but are most often interlinked, requiring a multifaceted, visionary approach that goes far beyond immediate humanitarian and security needs. Moreover, given the inherently transboundary nature of international migration, no country can deal with that challenge alone.

Today's meeting is indeed an opportunity to work towards a more cohesive approach in dealing with large movements of refugees and migrants by reinforcing existing frameworks and developing innovative approaches. We have chosen to focus on large movements of migrants and refugees, but our strategy must be framed within the larger debate on the interlinkages between migration and development and the ongoing efforts to improve the international aid architecture.

We should not forget that today's summit meeting follows several international initiatives in this area, including the first-ever World Humanitarian Summit in May. We need to build on the pledges already made so that we can address the underlying causes of the refugee and migration crisis and foster the collective actions needed to confront it. By setting out a range of principles, commitments and understandings, today's newly adopted New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) provides solid ground for strengthening international cooperation based on international solidarity and shared responsibility. Romania pledges its constructive engagement in the follow-up work aimed at adopting the global compacts in 2018.

As we collectively commit to improving the global governance of migration, Romania warmly welcomes

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the decision to include the International Organization for Migration in the United Nations family, building on a long history of close working ties.

Migration was recognized as an enabler of inclusive growth in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, but in order to translate that assertion into national development plans, we need to showcase the evidence base in order to guide the policymaking process and allow for correctly informed public dialogue. Changing the narrative on migration by countering stereotypes, managing expectations and rallying support around a set of shared values is key to adjusting our increasingly multi-ethnic and multicultural societies to the changing global landscape. One of the most effective ways of combating discrimination is through education, both at home and at school.

While we seek to maximize the benefits of migration, we should not downplay its hurdles and costs, which we see especially in so-called desperation migration. The anxieties of the local population also need to be acknowledged and addressed in a fair manner. Romania believes in a holistic and comprehensive approach that takes into account both the consequences and the root causes of the phenomenon. Neither a comprehensive refugee response nor well-managed migration policies can be sustained in the long run if the root causes of such movements are not addressed — for example, by making a genuine effort to prevent and resolve conflict. Migration cannot be dealt with in isolation from other global issues. While action strategies differ and rely on cooperation among the countries of origin, transit and destination, only the implementation of all the relevant 2030 Agenda provisions has the potential of truly transforming the current dynamics.

Europe is experiencing a migration challenge of unprecedented magnitude, which requires resolute action and a long-term strategy. The answer can only be cooperation and joint action on the part of all Member States, while bearing in mind respect for fundamental principles and values. Romania has been, and will continue to be, part of the European response. Although we have not experienced a major influx of displaced people — neither refugees nor migrants — we have supported, in the spirit of solidarity, the efforts at the European Union level, and we will continue to act in a principled way. We will continue to support solutions that combine innovative humanitarian, development and economic instruments, supported by political dialogue and partnerships. In addition to its financial contribution, Romania contributes human resources and technical means for strengthening border control, as well as search-and-rescue operations in the Mediterranean Sea.

That set of measures forms an integral part of our engagement, commitment and shared responsibility with the countries and populations most in need. We aim to concentrate our efforts on measures that include education, basic services, development cooperation and humanitarian assistance, as well as political dialogue. But I will not elaborate further on those subjects. To do that, I will use the opportunity of my statement in Round Table 4, on the theme "Global compact for responsibility-sharing for refugees, respect for international law".

The Acting Co-Chair: I now give the floor to Mr. Hamad Elgizouli, Commissioner of Refugees of the Sudan

Mr. Elgizouli (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of my country, I have the pleasure to extend to the General Assembly our thanks and gratitude for organizing this important meeting, which is being held at a time of great need. I would also like to take this opportunity to reaffirm our willingness to cooperate with Member States in implementing the meeting's outcomes.

The Sudan's geographic location, legacy and civilizational values have contributed to the transit of large numbers of refugees at various moments in history and under varying circumstances. The Sudan has been compelled to host, receive and protect refugees, despite all the difficulties we are facing. That situation has remained unchanged for five decades, and the flow of such persons continues. Today, the Sudan hosts more than 2 million refugees from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, Chad, Central Africa and, more recently, from Syria, Yemen and South Sudan.

The Sudan is fully committed to the relevant international and regional governance machinery and instruments. Large movements of refugees and migrants from neighbouring countries have led to the emergence of new challenges and developments for my country today. They come in the form of mixed migration, illegal migration and escape from camps to cities.

Human mobility has also been linked to the phenomenon of human smuggling and trafficking. My

country has made efforts to eradicate that phenomenon, which include the folllowing.

First, we havee set up of a supreme council for migration, headed by the Deputy President of the Republic. Secondly, a law has been adopted to combat human trafficking.

Thirdly, the 1974 refugee law was replaced by the 2014 refugee law so as to keep up with regional and international changes. The new law includes articles to combat human trafficking. Fourthly, the visa law was amended so that it is compatible with new changes and challenges.

Fifthly, Khartoum hosted a conference in October of 2014, in coordination with the African Union and the European Union, to combat human smuggling and trafficking in the Horn of African. Its outcome is entitled the Khartoum Process. That was followed by a conference in Rome in November of 2014. However, up until now, the recommendations of those conferences have not been implemented. We therefore count on donors to support the Sudan and to implement the outcomes of the conferences so that we can eradicate the inhumane phenomenon of human trafficking.

Sixthly, my country has signed a number of agreements with neighbouring countries to control our borders, in addition to a joint strategy signed with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration and the Commission for Refugees aimed at combating the phenomenon of human trafficking, especially in eastern Sudan, given that most of the victims are refugees and asylum-seekers.

The contribution of the international community regarding the sharing of burdens and responsibilities with host countries is based on a humane principle. We need large economic, social and environmental projects in that regard. Emergency situations around the world require donor States to support refugees.

We must identify the root causes for migration and the refugee crisis. We need to seize this opportunity. We also call on all countries to keep their borders open, because closing them will not offer a solution to the problem. We need international cooperation, and we need to consider the root causes in order to prevent that phenomenon.

In line with the outcome document of this high-level meeting on refugees and migrants (resolution 71/1), we reaffirm the need to solve the protracted refugee crisis, including the Palestinian refugee crisis. We also reaffirm the right to return as part of a just solution to the Palestine refugee problem, in accordance with the General Assembly resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative.

There are large numbers of Sudanese refugees in Chad, amounting to 240,000 persons, residing in camps in eastern Chad. Now that security and peace have returned to Darfur, a large number of them have started to return voluntarily to their homeland. We have held a tripartite meeting with Chad and UNHCR, and we expect to sign a tripartite agreement next month for the return of Sudanese refugees. However, in order to ensure a lasting return, we need to ease the integration of returnees into local communities. We call on UNHCR to implement the repatriation, reintegration, rehabilitation and reconstruction programme.

Khartoum is witnessing a lot of activities in response to the initiative launched by the President of the country for a national and intercommunal dialogue aimed at considering urgent priorities, including political stability and development, which will benefit all segments of society and also impact refugees and control their movements from and into the country.

In conclusion, I would like to address the large movements of South Sudanese refugees as a result of the recent war. Their numbers, up to August, have reached more than 700,000 refugees, mostly women and children. We have sought to treat them in accordance with international and national laws and norms. We have rushed to register and classify them and provide them with necessary services. A national task force has been established to begin the registration process. We call on UNHCR to allocate emergency budget funds to enable us to provide necessary services to those refugees.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Edward Nalbandian, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Armenia.

Mr. Nalbandian (Armenia): The convening of this meeting at such a high level indicates the growing prominence of the problem of migrants and refugees on the global agenda, including within the United Nations system, as well as a strong determination to tackle it.

Armenia has been facing the challenges relating to hosting refugees for almost three decades. In the late 1980s and the beginning of 1990s, Armenians were

massacred and expelled from their homes in Azerbaijan and found refuge in Armenia. This year again, in early April, Azerbaijan unleashed another large-scale military aggression against Nagorno Karabakh, accompanied by gross violations of international humanitarian law, which resulted in a number of casualties among civilians and another wave of displacement.

In that context, we would like to stress the significance of addressing the root causes of large movements of people by working to prevent conflicts and crisis situations and to promote the peaceful settlement of disputes and the achievement of long-term political solutions. Likewise, we would like to highlight the importance of providing equal, prompt and unhindered access to international humanitarian assistance for refugees and displaced persons in all affected parts of the world, without distinctions based on their current political status.

Armenia is deeply concerned by the situation in our immediate neighbourhood, the Middle East. On numerous occasions, Armenia has condemned the crimes committed by Da'esh and other terrorist groups, which threaten the people of the region and beyond. The war in Syria has had a devastating impact on its civilian population, including national and religious minorities, who face existential threats as a result of identity-based crimes perpetrated by terrorists and foreign fighters. The violence in the Middle East has not spared Syrian-Armenians, many of whom have lost their lives in terrorist attacks. Their Armenian settlements, churches, schools and cultural institutions have been destroyed.

One hundred years ago, Armenian refugees found shelter in many Arab countries after the Armenian genocide. Today, thousands of Armenians, together with other people from the Middle East, are again forced to abandon their places of residence. From Syria alone, more than 20,000 Armenians have found refuge in Armenia, making our country the third-largest recipient of Syrian refugees in Europe on a per capita basis.

We therefore have first-hand knowledge of what it means to be a refugee and to host refugees. The challenges of receiving, accommodating and integrating refugees from Syria are high on the agenda of the Armenian Government. We have been offering a variety of protection options, including accelerated asylum procedures and facilitated provision of residence permits and naturalization. The State supports refugees in setting up businesses and provides durable housing, free medical assistance and scholarships.

Armenia is committed to doing its utmost to address the issues of Syrian refugees. However, no one State can manage such large movements on its own. We believe that greater international cooperation is needed to assist host countries. To that end, we welcome the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) and believe that the full implementation of our collective commitments, particularly those referring to more equitable burden- and responsibility-sharing, could make a real difference for the benefit of refugees.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Mr. Mounzer (Syria) (*spoke in Arabic*): The attention of all countries, be they countries of origin or destination, is now being drawn to the phenomenon of migration in all its aspects, for it is a matter that concerns all of the peoples of the world. That has prompted Member States to establish a number of international bodies, such as the International Organization for Migration and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and to adopt dozens of resolutions and agreements that highlight the importance of the refugee and migration phenomenon.

Addressing the increasing movements of refugees and migrants requires objective research into all of the aspects and impacts of that phenomenon throughout the world. We should not confine ourselves to a certain region. We should not ignore refugees and migrants from any part of the world. We should stress the fact that research into this phenomenon demands respect for the basic rights granted to refugees, wherever they are, without any discrimination.

The delegation of Syria would like to express its concerns with regard to the contents of the outcome document of today's high-level meeting (resolution 71/1), in particular where it refers to the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul in May 2016 and to the outcomes, documents and commitments resulting from that conference. We stress that we do not accept the outcomes of that conference, as the Turkish authorities refused the participation of the delegation from Syria. The Turkish action represents a precedent that cannot be condoned when organizing United Nations conferences, especially given the fact that Syria had announced its participation in that conference.

The Secretariat must ensure that the host countries of such conferences do not prevent other countries from attending.

My delegation also expresses concern with regard to paragraph 19 of the outcome document of today's high-level meeting in its entirety, where reference is made to conferences on Syrian refugees. Given the fact that the outcome document addresses a general issue, it should cover all countries and not a specific country. The fact is that refugees and migrants are flowing into all parts of the world and that there are also people who are migrating because of natural circumstances. In discussing the so-called influx of Syrian refugees and migrants, one should bear in mind that Syrians represent only 20 per cent of that influx, while others are coming from African and Asian countries, sometimes holding forfeited Syrian passports.

The main causes and reasons behind the migration in the Middle East are terrorism by Da'esh and the Al-Nusra Front and other terrorist organizations, the continued Israeli occupation of Palestine, external interference in the internal affairs of the countries of the region and the unilateral course of economic procedures — for example, the brain drain and the looting of countries' resources, which deprives them of their riches. We in Syria deplore the circumstances imposed on Syrians as they flee terrorism, and we hope that all Syrians will be able to return to their country and contribute to the rebuilding of Syria together with their brothers and sisters.

While we recognize the genuine efforts made by some countries to host Syrians, we reject any attempts to take advantage of those who have left Syria by using them and their plight for political games or as pawns in a competition to see who can take in the most people. We call on the international community to bear its responsibility to address that phenomenon and bring an end to the presence and activities of foreign terrorist fighters in Syria.

In conclusion, my delegation asserts that in order to find a solution to the Syrian refugee and migrant crisis, urgent work is required on several tracks.

First, terrorism targeting the Syrian people must be brought to an end. It must be made incumbent upon all of the countries of the world that fund, shelter, train and arm those terrorists, attack by air and land the sovereignty of my country and facilitate their entrance into Syria to stop doing so and to implement the resolutions of the Security Council.

Secondly, the unilateral course of measures imposed against Syria by some countries must also be brought to an end. Such measures undermine the livelihoods of Syrians, compelling citizens to leave the country in search of a better life, which causes them to fall prey to organized crime groups and human traffickers and smugglers.

Thirdly, efforts should be made to find a peaceful political solution to the Syrian crisis on the basis of a national dialogue among Syrians, away from any pressures or external agendas.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Khemaies Jhinaoui, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Tunisia.

Mr. Jhinaoui (Tunisia) (*spoke in Arabic*): May I begin by extending our thanks to the President of the General Assembly for holding this important high-level meeting on the matter of refugees and internally displaced persons, as well as migrants. This is a time to take a deeper international look at phenomena of that type. Our thanks go in particular to Mr. Peter Thomson, President of the General Assembly at its seventy-first session. I would like to wish him every success in carrying out his duties. The same goes to Mr. Lykketoft for everything he did as President of the General Assembly at its seventieth session.

The matter of refugees and migrants is well known across the globe. It requires that we find a comprehensive vision as a basis for solutions, bearing in mind the importance of migration as a factor contributing to development, a vision in which people can place their trust.

From the very first years of its independence, Tunisia has sought to uphold human rights and is highly interested in the topic we are discussing. Over the course of the years, we have seen a large flow of refugees and migrants fleeing conflicts in Libya. We have hosted those refugees and migrants and continue to do so to date. I am referring to hundreds of thousands of Libyans, as well as Syrians, who are experiencing great difficulty. We have stood alongside the Libyan people and have always made it clear that we stand ready to apply the Libyan Political Agreement for national reconciliation in addition to tackling all relevant issues, in particular, ending the actions of terrorist groups and their political and economic impacts on the country. Again, this is a matter of promoting the unity of Libya, combating human trafficking and halting its consequences for neighbouring countries.

Allow me highlight the plight of Palestinian refugees. It is very important that their suffering

be alleviated. We stand ready to provide them with protection pursuant to all relevant human rights laws.

Over the past year, Tunisia has received more than 1,000 refugees displaced by war, including individuals who arrived by boat, among other means. Developing countries are particularly affected by, and bear the brunt of, the crisis. In that connection, I would like to emphasize the suffering of the hundreds of Tunisians who have lost their lives. It is important for those individuals to be recognized, because they lost their lives along the coast of Italy. Some of them are still missing, and we have no information on their whereabouts. We are now implementing a national strategy, one seeking to ensure safe and orderly migration so as to ensure that migrants' rights are upheld and individuals are protected against illegal migration activities. That requires a policy to address the root causes of migration, so as to ensure development and dignity for people and better livelihoods.

The outcomes of the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul should provide the guidelines for a sound policy and an international partnership on the matter of refugees and migrants. We pay tribute to the outcome document of today's meeting on the matter of large movements of refugees and migrants (resolution 71/1), which should serve as the basis for reviewing States' policies with respect to migrants and refugees, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

I would like to emphasize the need to consider the root causes of the mass displacement of persons. That requires ensuring the peaceful settlement of conflicts while upholding human rights and ensuring that the Sustainable Development Goals are achieved, pursuant to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. That should be done through the close linkage between peace and security and by taking on board the interests of countries of both origin and destination.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary-General of the Council of Europe.

Mr. Jagland (Council of Europe): I will be speaking today about Europe and its neighbourhood on behalf of the Council of Europe, a 47-member intergovernmental organization that is the guardian of the European Convention on Human Rights.

The European Convention on Human Rights clearly states that everyone who sets foot on European soil, regardless of origin, whether legal or illegal, enjoys certain basic rights. But such rights are not sufficient in the current situation. Cooperation among the 47 member States is very much needed, and without cooperation member States will push problems onto each other. Unfortunately, that has already begun, and it will only exacerbate the problems we face.

Children must be at the top of our concerns. I urge this high-level meeting to agree on meaningful action on refugees and migrants, including the effective protection and relocation of those arriving on European soil and an end to detention. Children should not be detained in detention centres; they should be in school. Access to accommodation, in particular for children who are travelling to the European continent alone — unaccompanied minors — is a source of concern. They must have the right to reunite with their families. We are aware that many who arrive on the European continent already have relatives present and that they should have the right to reunite with their families. Unfortunately, European legislation is making that increasingly difficult. Children should have the right to attend school, regardless of their status — whether legal or illegal migrants — because all children have the right to go to school and to live in decent conditions.

I would like to add a few brief points in that regard, because children are the most vulnerable, and end with the following. I do not believe that the world has understood the depth of the crisis that we face. Of course, the crisis in Europe's neighbourhood is an unbelievable one. It is also utterly unbelievable that the war in Syria continues to rage in the twenty-first century. The world is better organized than ever before, yet it appears to be more chaotic. It is increasingly dangerous, as what we are witnessing in Europe is leading to more extreme attitudes on the European continent. We are now witnessing a very dangerous situation, and we do not understand the real consequences of the situation if we are unable to end it.

I do not have a solution to the crisis, but we can alleviate the problems of those affected. Unfortunately, United Nations organizations such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Food Programme are underfunded. In the midst of the crisis, the World Food Programme had to decrease its supply of food to camps in Jordan. What

we can do is to actually fund the European Union organizations properly.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Dominique Prince de la Rochefoucauld-Montbel, Minister of Health and International Cooperation of the Sovereign Order of Malta.

Mr. De la Rochefoucauld-Montbel (Sovereign Order of Malta): The question is not why people migrate. They have always done so. But today's migrations are an explosion in the movements of peoples, an explosion of humanitarian problems. How can we, the international community, effectively meet the challenge of the more than 244 million people on the move, more than 65 million internally displaced persons and refugees, and more than 6 million people stranded?

The vocation of the Order of Malta, a sovereign and religious entity under public international law, has always been to care for the vulnerable people of society. Today in particular, the vulnerable we support are migrants and refugees, and we do so by providing aid along the Balkan route, as well as housing and assimilation assistance in a number of European countries, by saving lives in the Mediterranean Sea and the Aegean Sea and by implementing development programmes in the migration countries of origin.

At the World Humanitarian Summit, held in Istanbul on 23 and 24 May, the Order of Malta affirmed those commitments, which are in line with the conclusions of the outcome document, entitled "Commitments to Action", namely, "to work differently to meet and reduce people's humanitarian needs". We emphasized that faith-based organizations and religious institutions also had a special role to play in the field of humanitarian assistance for refugees, displaced people and migrants. We therefore applaud the inclusion of the role of faith-based institutions in the outcome document and its annexes of this high-level meeting (resolution 71/1).

We know that there are widely differing causes of migration: war, religious or racial persecution, climate change and the search for economic and social opportunities. Those drivers of migration demand global cooperation — a consistent, coordinated approach at both the international and the national levels.

Politicians must play a responsible role and explain to their constituents the benefits of migrants and refugees as an indispensable resource for economic growth. We call for development programmes that cover extended time periods, complemented by emergency aid for immediate suffering. We call for adequate funding for the humanitarian and development aspects of the problem. In order to respond to the challenge, the recommendations of the World Humanitarian Summit on bridging the humanitarian development gap must be implemented.

How can it be that in a world that produces $78 trillion in gross domestic product, we cannot together agree to allocate and administer $15 billion for humanitarian aid, which is the target set by the World Humanitarian Summit? Immediate action for refugees and migrants requires that we organize the integration of refugees and migrants, so that they become an asset. We must continue to save lives along migration routes, emphasize and foster respect for human rights, draw attention to the living conditions in so-called safe houses, which often include sexual exploitation and slavery, and create work in refugee camps for adults and organize schooling for bored and directionless youth.

If we do not agree on those priorities as a united international community, we risk the radicalization of people through idleness and the production of a generation of millions of unassimilated and unskilled people. Immediate action is urgently needed on the part of States and international organizations, action aimed at opening safe and legal paths to enter developed countries. At the same time there must be work towards cohesion in industrialized countries' policies on migration, to develop resettlement and relocation opportunities and to dignify reception capabilities. Projects must be implemented in the migrants' countries of origin and transit and induce people to settle. Populist attitudes and policies of fear must be discouraged, and consideration must be given to how the international media could cooperate in that effort. The fight against traffickers and smugglers of human beings must be intensified, and, finally, migration must be dealt with as a foreign policy issue and not a border security issue.

What we are facing is but a beginning — from local migration to global, from global migration to massive country migrations. To be successful, we must challenge global indifference, fear and welfare selfishness. We, the Sovereign Order of Malta, actively support the task of the United Nations and the international community, namely, to offer migrants and refugees a better world.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on the Envoy of the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States on Humanitarian Affairs and Relief, Sheikha Hessa Al Thani.

Sheikha Al Thani (League of Arab States) (*spoke in Arabic*): I have the pleasure to participate in this high-level meeting of the General Assembly to discuss one of the most dangerous and important problems in our world today, which is a real concern and a real challenge, especially in our Arab region. Of course we are talking about the large-scale movements of refugees and migrants.

The League of Arab States has sought to participate in a positive and effective manner in international forums, especially those concerned with migration and refugees, by offering a unified Arab vision. We prepared for this important meeting by holding an extraordinary meeting among ourselves to discuss migration in cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration and with the participation of Ms. Karen AbuZayd, Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Summit on Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants. The meeting, held at the League of Arab States headquarters in Cairo, produced outcomes that included a focus on the need to devise solutions to the crises that have led to the increasing numbers of refugees and migrants. We need a unified vision in order to find solutions for those problems in a way that will ensure the affected countries' stability and security.

We also reaffirmed the right of Palestinian refugees to return, a right aligned with resolution 194 (III) of 1948. Especially for the Palestinian refugees in Syria, we need to provide support through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East in order to ensure their dignity and well-being.

When it comes to assessing the root causes of migration, the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) asserts that we need to provide opportunities for orderly, safe and regular migration. We also need to implement the Sustainable Development Goals. All of those measures will ensure that migration remains safe and regular, especially within the Arab world, through cooperation aimed at dealing with migration and refugee issues and displacements, given that all of those aspects of the problem have had repercussions. Especially in host communities, we need to cooperate and support countries that are affected by such movements, based on the principle of shared and differentiated responsibilities.

We also need to safeguard the human dignity of refugees and migrants. We need to fight discrimination, xenophobia and racism. The Declaration also commends the efforts of our countries and their contributions, either through the hosting of large numbers of refugees — 52 per cent of the refugees throughout the world are Palestinian — or through the provision of the necessary humanitarian assistance through donor conferences by calling on countries to share the burden and increase their support for refugees. When we discuss the future global compacts for sharing responsibility for refugees and for safe, regular and orderly migration, the Arab countries have reaffirmed that it is important to provide safe and legal opportunities for migrants that protect human rights and dignity and simplify procedures for visas.

We also need to integrate and mainstream migration into our development policies in order to meet the Sustainable Development Goals. Our Declaration also speaks to the need to address the precarious conditions of migrants and refugees. We must also look at the journey upon which they embark as they try to reach their destination countries. We have to ensure that their human rights are protected, irrespective of their legal status, because we all know that it is important to protect human dignity. That is extremely important, and we need to focus our attention on that issue in our various meetings, especially during this high-level meeting. We need to provide support to efforts to rescue irregular migrants in the Mediterranean and to provide those people with accommodations. We need to pay particular attention to women, youth, the elderly and people with disabilities.

We have agreed to place importance, during the closing ceremony of our meeting, on the global compact's call for a safe, regular and orderly migration. We have also agreed to continue with our regional consultations, so as to follow up on what will be agreed under the framework of the compact that will emerge from this high-level meeting. We also need to follow up on the results of the relevant agreements and on what the General Assembly will decide in that regard.

In conclusion, I would like to say that there is a great need to determine the proper ways in which to deal with

large movements of refugees and migrants, especially in the light of the current circumstances confronting the world, in particular the Arab region. That must entail adopting a human rights approach that can ensure and account for the protection of human rights, while preserving the dignity of migrants and refugees and taking into account the security of countries.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on Mr. Lamberto Zannier, Secretary General of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Mr. Zannier (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe): The international movement of people, a phenomenon as old as humankind, has become a deeply contentious issue, dividing rather than uniting our international community. That development is very unfortunate and must be reversed. We are meeting today at this milestone summit meeting to reject any form of manipulation of the issue of migration and to reaffirm the crucial role that it can play in the development of our societies.

We are also here to underscore the responsibilities of the international community in general for the protection of refugees and the human rights of all. The international movement of people is a defining feature of our interconnected world. We cannot address it as if it were a temporary phenomenon, nor can we exclusively focus on the current emergency. We need to combine a renewed impetus on the humanitarian side with a strategic approach tackling the root causes.

Conflict, poverty and the quest for a better life continue to be the lead drivers of migration. Yet the relative weight of each one and the profile of the people on the move are constantly changing. A growing number of them, many of whom are under age, are blurring the difference between refugees and migrants, since they come from countries suffering from devastating economic crises or the collapse of State structures.

In order to respond to changing realities, including the growing impact of climate change as a driver for migration, we will need to be able to devise new approaches. The mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is to build bridges between countries within our diverse region and find ways to replace confrontation with dialogue. Our 57 States and 11 Mediterranean and Asian partners, including key countries of destination, transit and origin, have a clear stake in transforming the challenges posed by a large unregulated flow into an opportunity for mobilizing cooperation and solidarity.

Although we must acknowledge and address factors relating to migration, we cannot let migration become another fault line. We need to work together so as to ensure that human rights will be at the centre of our action. We also need to join forces so as to target those who exploit people on the move. The OSCE is proud of its contribution to the fight against organized crime, including the fight against human trafficking. An example of a contribution by a regional organization like the OSCE would be the commitment by all its members to incorporate international legislation — in particular the provisions of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, also known as the Palermo Convention, and its Protocols — as a significant step in the fight against human traffickers and smugglers.

But a long-term approach also aims at the successful integration of migrants and refugees. It is our plan to continue working in the area of migration labour policy reform that would support the expansion of legal channels. We are also committed to promoting tolerance and non-discrimination, including by building on our track record in dealing with national minorities.

It is my belief that States should seize the initiative and use today's momentum to set new global principles. As the largest regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, the OSCE stands ready to work together with other regional organizations and the United Nations to ensure the regional application of new global guidelines. As part of the follow-up to this high-level meeting, we can explore a road map in which regional organizations act as a gateway to globalization.

Mr. Rahming (Bahamas), Acting Co-Chair, took the Chair.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on Mr. Yves Leterme, Secretary-General of the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance.

Mr. Leterme (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance): At the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance — the only intergovernmental organization with an exclusive mandate on democracy — we are convinced that the international community should address three priorities.

First of all, we must meet the immediate needs of the millions of migrants and refugees on the move. They are refugees, they are migrants, but most of all, they are women and men, children and youth whose lives are at risk and whose future is jeopardized because of insufficient international responses. Secondly, we must address the root causes of the violent conflicts and the conditions of poverty at the base of the flows of migrants and refugees. Member States of the United Nations should turn the commitments adopted today into reality. Thirdly, we must jointly promote an effective counternarrative that demystifies the lies of populism and identifies the opportunities that the current crisis provides our societies.

A few years before the Second World War, the Italian politician and philosopher, Antonio Gramsci, wrote in his *Prison Notebooks*:

> "The crisis consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born; in this interregnum a great variety of morbid symptoms appear."

Today, we truly do live in a time of such morbid symptoms. The dangers of inaction are real. Against that background and in line with Hannah Arendt's analysis, why should refugees be considered the stateless, rightless scum of the earth?

As noted by many speakers today, the current crisis stems from civil wars and violent conflicts that the international community has not yet been able to address and resolve. We are witnessing unprecedented flows of about 65 million refugees and migrants. They include both people escaping wars and those who cannot cope with autocratic rule or extreme poverty. The interlinkages between violent extremism, fundamentalism and the scourge of international terrorism pose serious security threats. The rise of populism in established democracies, at a time of protracted economic setbacks, is an indicator of the closing down of public spaces in which the prevailing narrative is one of fear, anger and intolerance.

Opportunistic and cynical politicians stake their electoral fortunes on riding petty nationalism and xenophobic feelings. Indeed, migrants and refugees become the culprits of all that goes wrong. They are turned into a threat to a supposedly comfortable status quo. Many Governments pursue easy ways out of the crisis, including the adoption of legislation that, in the name of security, risks contradicting long-held human rights commitments.

In the span of a few years, many countries have seen bridge-building rhetoric replaced by policies prompted by narrow-minded, short-term electoral concerns. Their results are plain to see — the proliferation of new walls reminiscent of the shaken foundations of twentieth-century international relations and realpolitik agreements aimed at curbing movements and flows, even at the cost of compromising certain human rights standards. We should reverse such worrisome trends.

As history has shown over and over again, migration is not a threat to nation-States, let alone democracies, but intolerance and hatred undoubtedly are. The common objective of the international community ought to be to build a future for the next generations, not to combat migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers. We need the wisdom to collectively question short-term solutions that produce negligible results at huge human costs and bring about immense long-term social, economic and political damage and human suffering.

Together we need to build a new vision that places the energy and potential of today's migrants and refugees within the framework of tomorrow's unfolding development outcomes, as envisaged in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now give the floor to Mr. Saber Chowdhury, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Mr. Chowdhury (Inter-Parliamentary Union): Millions of people are on the move within their own countries and across borders. More than ever before, a great number of those people are not just seeking a better life; they are literally running for their lives, fearing persecution, starvation, devastation, destitution and torture. We have a real emergency on our hands that will only grow worse if we do not take decisive action. We are past the time for small, reluctant, tentative steps. A long-range, long-term coordinated and multidimensional solution grounded in human rights is needed.

Migrants and refugees are among the most vulnerable people in the world. By virtue of their transient status, they also lack a political voice, as they do not get to vote or participate in politics. That places a special and particular responsibility on members of parliament, as representatives of the people, to listen carefully, not

only to the concerns of the host communities but also to the migrants themselves. Beyond that, parliamentarians must ensure that international law is upheld, particularly when it comes to the obligations of States to receive and assist refugees and asylum-seekers.

The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants adopted today (resolution 71/1) certainly goes in the right direction. I am very pleased to see very strong convergence and coming together, in terms of the overall approach and specific policy prescriptions, between that Declaration and the one that the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) adopted during its Assembly at this time last year, in Geneva, following a four-day debate on the moral and economic imperatives that call for fairer, smarter and more humane migration. We certainly have much in common that we can build upon.

Like members of the Assembly, members of parliament would, for the most part, like to see a shift in the way that migrants and refugees are seen: no longer as a burden, but as a responsibility to be shared; not just as a cost, but as an economic opportunity for the host countries and local communities; not only as an issue of border controls, but as one of orderly settlement and social integration; no longer as a threat to national identity, but as a chance to embrace and celebrate diversity as a principle of human interaction in a globalized world.

We must work together — Governments, parliaments and civil society — to change the negative narrative about migration that pervades public culture and the media. We must stand firm against all expressions of xenophobia, racism and discrimination and in favour of the realization of the human rights of migrants. We also must pay special attention to intersecting forms of discrimination that some migrants or refugees face, in particular discrimination based on their nationality, ethnicity or sex, both in national laws and in practice.

Migrant women and children are at particular risk of exploitation and abuse. Disregard for their specific needs and for those of disabled migrants may lead to other forms of discrimination, in addition to the frequent prejudice against migrants and refugees. Above all, we must have a common understanding of what it will take to manage migration more effectively, including by combating its root causes, such as conflict, poverty, natural disasters and climate change, to mention only the most obvious ones.

Undoing the drivers of migration in the countries of origin is not easy. Nor is it easy for receiving countries with high unemployment, stagnant economies and incomes and strained budgets to be more receptive to migrant workers and refugees. The good news is that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which came into effect this year, provide us with all the guidance we need to connect the dots at the policy level and to build common ground among all concerned. If we take decisive action to implement the comprehensive framework of the SDGs to fight poverty, restore political stability and shore up the environment, more people will be able to live in their own countries in full security and freedom, with the hope of a better life for themselves and their children. Implementing the SDGs will also enable host countries to effectively integrate migrants into their societies and economies.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union is determined to make a strong contribution on this front by helping parliaments institutionalize the SDGs through capacity-building and policy advice. Going forward, the SDGs will loom large in our strategic planning and in our very close partnership with the United Nations. As part of this work, we will be building on a recent handbook for parliamentarians on migration, human rights and governance that was produced together with the International Labour Organization and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

As usual, when it comes to agreements such as the one adopted today, much will depend on the political will to implement what has been agreed. That is where, once again, parliamentarians will be critical. It is perhaps the main reason why this year's General Assembly resolution on the interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the IPU (resolution 70/298) invites the IPU and the United Nations to work together in supporting Governments to facilitate the orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration.

We look forward to working with the General Assembly to advance that critical issue based on our shared vision of the road ahead.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Elhadj As Sy, Secretary General of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Mr. As Sy (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies): In recent days, we have talked a lot about refugees and migrants. These are not identities; rather, they are situations in which so many people find themselves due to circumstances far beyond their control, situations where people are trying to flee from home because home is no longer safe.

But today home is not only unsafe for the people who live there. It is also unsafe for many others who are there to try to provide help and support. On the way to this room just now, I received the devastating news that the staff and volunteers who had been so proudly celebrating the fact that, this morning, they had finally arrived in Aleppo, had been bombed. Fourteen of them lost their lives, bringing the total number to 65, which is totally unacceptable.

Today, then, we ask the world leaders to seize the opportunity presented by this summit to act together to stop the death and suffering of those who leave their homes in the very human pursuit of safety, dignity and a future for their children. Maybe we should also call on everybody to start at the beginning, which would be to stop the war, stop the violence and stop all the situations that are pushing people out of their homes.

States bear the responsibility for protecting the lives, well-being and dignity of migrants, regardless of their legal status. The National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies around the world are ready to do their part to help to support them. But we must set our collective goals higher. Today, far too many people are dying on their journeys. They are drowning in the sea — as we often see — collapsing in the desert — as we do not see — suffocating in car trunks or crowded trucks — which we often read about in the media. Unaccompanied children are disappearing. Without access to reliable and credible information, people fall victim to human traffickers. They are preyed upon by gangs and held and abused in illegal camps. This, again, is unacceptable.

It is a stain on our shared humanity, as is the indifference that too often greets their suffering. We call on States to take all necessary steps to ensure that migrants can travel in safety and dignity to protect themselves against accidents, attacks, exploitation and abuse, against having their families split apart. We call on States to ensure that they have access to health care, legal advice, food and shelter while they are on the move. They also need access to information to help them make timely and informed decisions along their migration route.

Once they reach their destination, we call on host States to uphold the rights of all migrants under international and national law and, in particular, to ensure that rights related to asylum and refugee protection are fully respected. We also ask that their social integration be facilitated and that they be protected from discrimination, stigmatization and xenophobia.

We must work together to change the increasingly frightening narrative about migrants. Various points of view about migrants may be legitimate, but xenophobia and racism are not. Discrimination and violence cannot be tolerated and should be called out for what they are. On this point, we look to States for their leadership and commitment.

Finally, we pledge our support. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, through the 190 national societies and 17 million volunteers on the ground, is present at all points along the migration routes: in countries of origin, transit and destination. We see the daily suffering and indignity that is the reality for too many people. We pledge to continue our work to protect and assist women, children and men who are forced out of their countries around the world, regardless of their legal status, because, indeed, no human being is illegal.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on Her Excellency Ms. Michaëlle Jean, Secretary General of the International Organization of la Francophonie.

Ms. Jean (International Organization of la Francophonie) (*spoke in French*): As I listened this morning to testimonies and statements about the situations forcing thousands of women, men, young people and children to flee, I assure those who are present that this brings back painful memories for me.

For me, it is not a question of statistics, figures or data, but a chapter in my life, because I was once there. As a child, I experienced this difficult ordeal with my parents, like hundreds of thousands of Haitian families who had to leave everything behind in a situation of total insecurity, then take the road to exile with nothing to their name in order to escape the repression, daily violence and extreme poverty under the bloody and corrupt dictatorial regime of François Duvalier.

Every day I think how fortunate my family and I were to emerge alive from that nightmare. And how

lucky we were to find asylum in Canada, where we could rebuild our lives and become full citizens. Who could know that one day the little refugee I was would be called upon to occupy the highest office in Canada, that of Governor General and Commander-in-Chief, and today the office of the Secretary General of the International Organization of la Francophonie?

Nevertheless, every day, knowing where I have come from, I think about the hundreds of thousands of my fellow Haitians, whose bodies were crushed by repression or who perished at sea. I think of those who still face the worst conditions as they are driven by despair, and who are only cold, anonymous statistics, classified in the refugee/migrant column. I do not have enough time here to share all the reasons that led us to flee, and the strength we survivors needed to recover from our wounds, start over from scratch and rebuild our lives elsewhere.

We arrived dispossessed, it is true, but we were still rich from all that we were and from our courage and determination. We survivors continuously ask ourselves whether our stories and our suffering will be told. Here, echoing my own story, I am thinking of these millions of persons who are frightened and forever traumatized today, at this very moment. I am thinking about these millions of children who make up more than half of all refugees, displaced persons and migrants. And all of this is happening before our very eyes.

We need a humanist approach that respects the dignity and fundamental rights of persons. We must also adopt a multilateral, comprehensive, concerted, cooperative, coherent and responsible approach. Let us look reality in the face and ask ourselves why in 2015, for the first time in the history of the United Nations, we saw more than 65 million people forcibly displaced. Why were more than 1 million refugees and migrants in 2015 willing to confront the desert and the Mediterranean Sea in order to try to reach Europe at the cost of their lives? This year is already the most deadly yet because we have not acted quickly enough.

We must act and address the root causes of migration and their tragic manifestations alike. To address the root causes, the International Organization of La Francophonie (IOF), which I represent, is doing that. The 85 States and organizations that are members of our organization on five continents include countries of origin, transit, destination and, ultimately, host countries. This reveals how thoroughly the situation touches us all and how all its facets draw our attention every day.

We are not standing idle; we are acting. In addition to our education and training programmes, we have programmes to strengthen the capacity of communities. We support entrepreneurship and job creation programmes for women and young people in the context of a vibrant economic strategy to help the countries most affected by these mass exoduses of persons. We are sparing no effort. For example, in 12 sub-Saharan French-speaking countries we are building incubator programmes to enhance the capacities of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises and industries, which are engines of growth and create jobs. We must create reasons to hope. We must create opportunities and open doors. We must upend the sense of hopelessness, of a future without hope or power, felt by so many young people and women. These support programmes are essential to the most vulnerable countries in the francophone world in adapting to the devastating effects of climate change.

The International Organization of La Francophonie is also firmly committed to preventing conflict, rebuilding and strengthening peace, entrenching democracy and the rule of law and ensuring respect for rights and freedoms and for cultural and religious diversity. What we all have in common is the shared sense of urgency. We know that these large movements of refugees and migrants are not just a passing phase. In this globalized world, we must live and act jointly, with a shared responsibility, ethically and, of course, effectively. Beyond our confusion over the issue of forced displacement and those left behind, it is our joint responsibility to tackle this phenomenon relentlessly as we see all this suffering, indifference and everyone in it for themselves and isolated from each other — all so pathetic and illusory in our world without borders.

We must act urgently in brotherhood and solidarity to revive our traditions of hospitality and to get to know and understand each other better. It is also our common responsibility to counter with all our energy hate speech, xenophobic biases and extremist movements fed by populism and extreme nationalism that are manipulated for purely electoral gain to fuel fear of the other and the rejection of the foreign. In the short term, we are jointly responsible to consider both long- and short-term migratory policies based on burden-sharing and international cooperation. This must be a win-win exchange. Rather than erect walls or unroll and set up

barbed wire, we should invest in sustainable economic development. IOF adds its voice to that end.

As I commend this first United Nations high-level summit to address large movements of refugees and migrants, rejoice at seeing us all here together and welcome the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, I see how determined we are to mobilize all our efforts and actions. But I would like to know that we will work in a complementary way and take into account in an inclusive, significant and coordinated way existing initiatives and those that are yet to come, in a full spirit of partnership with and alongside populations. We cannot continue to act each on our own and to see so many resources go to waste because we lack coordination.

It is in that spirit that we are approaching all these international partnerships and come here to the United Nations to sound a warning of the urgent need to re-examine our actions in a entirely new way and harmonize our work so that we can better answer the needs of the populations at risk, who place their trust in us. Let us be remember that history will judge us.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now give the floor Ms. Irene Khan, Director-General of the International Development Law Organization.

Ms. Khan (International Development Law Organization): As the head of the world's only intergovernmental organization exclusively devoted to advancing the rule of law and development, I am honoured to address this high-level meeting.

We need no reminder of the urgency of the refugee and migration crisis or the intensity of human suffering. What we do need is to recall that their plight is a direct consequence of the failure to uphold the rule of law, human rights and humanitarian norms — the failure of institutions to protect and of the powerful to muster the political will to find solutions. Men, women and children are risking their lives to flee persecution, war and poverty and build a new future for themselves. But when abroad, they confront inequality and injustice. They are neither able to return home safely nor integrate into new societies with dignity and rights.

Sadly, in far too many countries, refugees and migrants are being demonized and criminalized for short-term political gains. Citizens' fears are being manipulated to create a climate of suspicion, mistrust, xenophobia and racism. Far too often, those fleeing terror are being deliberately confused with those who are suspected of generating terror. Just because refugees and migrants do not have documents does not mean that they do not have rights. The rule of law, properly understood and applied, ensures that all people are equal and entitled to equal protection, no matter who they are or where, uprooted or at home.

Refugee and migration issues do not exist in a legal vacuum. The conventions, treaties, norms and laws are well established but, regrettably, not well respected. There is an enormous deficit of commitment, compliance and capacity.

The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) is an important and timely reminder that the international legal framework constructed with great care over the past century provides a solid basis for protecting the rights of people on the move and for finding solutions to their plight. The legal architecture provides the foundation on the basis of which the two distinct global compacts for refugees and migrants must be constructed.

The New York Declaration is only a first step, and what follows will be critical. As the international community moves forward, the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) wishes to underline three key points.

First, there must be no compromise on the rule of law. Shortchanging legal norms today will only store up problems for tomorrow.

Secondly, development and humanitarian assistance must work in tandem, not in sequence, to help support people on the move at a much earlier stage. False lines make no sense in a world where borders can no longer hold people back and where globalization is creating new opportunities and threats that require global, comprehensive responses.

Thirdly, investing in the rule of law is an integral part of sustainable development, as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) has made clear. By strengthening institutions, the rule of law ensures justice and accountability. By empowering people, it helps to build resilient societies. The more Governments and the international community invest in the rule of law, the better equipped they will be to protect and assist refugees, migrants and displaced persons.

The marriage between the United Nations and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) acknowledges the need for new thinking and new partnerships. The rule of law provides an opportunity for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the IOM and Member States to be bold and innovative while remaining rights-centred and people-focused. IDLO stands ready to work with all concerned to identify solutions that protect and empower refugees, migrants and displaced persons.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now give the floor to Mr. Emmanuel Roux, Special Representative of the International Criminal Police Organization.

Mr. Roux (International Criminal Police Organization): First, I want to thank Ambassador Thomson, President of the General Assembly, for hosting this timely event and also commend the tremendous work done by his predecessor and by Jordan and Ireland as facilitators.

Given the current large-scale refugee displacements, it is now more than ever time to face the difficult realities. INTERPOL, as the only global police cooperation organization, is committed to helping the States Members of the United Nations to do so. In June 2016, intelligence gathered through INTERPOL's operation Intercops Spartacus III led to the arrest of 18 suspects about to smuggle victims between Colombia and Ecuador, in abysmal conditions. The victims rescued included pregnant women and young infants, several requiring urgent medical attention. The operation also dismantled a human-trafficking network that trafficked hundreds of women and girls from South America to Asia with fake identification documents. These are not isolated incidents, but, rather, what illegal and irregular migration is: an industry run by organized criminal groups that generate huge earnings, with an average profit of $5 billion to $6 billion a year, which can fuel terrorism and serious transnational crime.

The 13 November 2015 Paris attacks have also shown us that terrorists will use opportunistic social crises such as migration to achieve their goals. One of the suicide bombers entered Europe as part of a large influx of refugees, registering at a refugee camp before making his way to Paris.

Given these examples, our response to large movements of refugees and migrants should be two-pronged: it must include improving migration management to mitigate risks such as people-smuggling, human trafficking, sexual exploitation and crimes against children, and must dismantle the criminal smuggling networks behind illegal immigration. But just as important, our response must also address the root causes of destabilization, forced displacement and irregular migration. INTERPOL can assist on both fronts, but, in the interests of time, I will focus only on the first.

INTERPOL's strategy, endorsed by the European Union and the African Union, deals with the risks of irregular migration and focuses on equipping States Members of the United Nations with the tools, the skills and the operational know-how to disrupt the criminal networks responsible. INTERPOL leads two working groups on this issue. The first is a human trafficking experts group and the other is a specialized operational network against migrant smuggling. We have developed a handbook for border management in West Africa and combined this capacity-building with official trainings and live operations.

In addition, one of the key ways to fight irregular migration is stronger border security. INTERPOL's database of stolen and lost travel documents contains 54 million documents, enabling border-control officers to immediately check if invalid or forged travel documents are being used for illegal cross-border movements.

INTERPOL policing capabilities have proved to greatly benefit member countries in the fight against irregular migration, but in order to do our work efficiently we need the strong political backing of States. Our readily available tools are at the disposal of all States to mitigate the security and crime-related risks that come with such large movements of people, which in turn protects migrants and refugees.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now give the floor to Mr. Patrick Gomes, Secretary General of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States.

Mr. Gomes (African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States): The 79 States members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group welcome this timely and relevant summit on migration. The ACP-European Union (EU) Cotonou Agreement provides for an ongoing dialogue on migratory flows that is jointly pursued to address the issues of the protection of human rights, non-discrimination, the treatment of third-country nationals and strategies to reduce poverty — the basic issues of the ACP-EU dialogue on migration.

The upheavals and sheer numbers of forced movements of people and the attendant humanitarian crises over the past two decades require measures to overcome the negative aspects while strengthening the benefits of migration. This implies attention to multiple drivers of migration — political, economic, social and environmental. Political drivers, for instance, stem from the prevalence of conflict, wars, persecution and violation of human rights. These contribute to dire consequences for vulnerable populations, particularly women and children, the aged and the disabled.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development underscores the imperatives of peace and security as enablers of sustainable development. Building peaceful, cohesive and secure societies is therefore a prerequisite for overcoming the structural causes of forced migration and internal displacement.

Economic drivers include financial instabilities, high rates of unemployment, especially among young people, and the lack of access to health care and other social services. These drivers give rise to growing poverty and inequality that in turn push people to migrate, using legal or illegal networks. From droughts to floods, climatic disasters give rise to climate refugees. The ACP Group supports global initiatives such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction aimed at mitigating risks of disaster and the consequent displacement of people.

Addressing such drivers of migration requires international solidarity through joint efforts to effectively implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Six Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets on migration allow for a systematic approach to the interrelated issues of linking migration, development and social transformation. Additionally, the situation of migrant workers is highlighted in SDG 8, on decent work for all, and should address reducing youth unemployment by promoting youth entrepreneurship.

ACP member States are partners to migration mechanisms that include the Khartoum and Rabat Processes, which formed the background to the Valletta Conference held under the aegis of the Africa-EU Partnership on Migration, Mobility and Employment, in November 2015. Every encouragement must be given to implement the Valletta Action Plan.

Academic and research mobility and the demands for needed skills in developed countries require well-defined strategies for cooperation between sending, transit and receiving countries. It is generally agreed that migration has demonstrated positive effects to both sending and receiving countries, with the latter receiving needed skills in their service sectors.

Many ACP States benefit significantly from remittances. In 2015, for instance, remittances to developing countries amounted to $432 billion, more than three times the official development assistance of that year. The ACP therefore reiterates its call for reduced banking transaction charges and acceptable correspondent banking arrangements to assist with remittances for developing countries. The ACP-EU dialogue on migration will continue to treat migration from a development perspective, recognizing that it needs to be addressed at its root causes, namely, poverty and the absence of economic opportunity.

In conclusion, the ACP reiterates its support for the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) and calls for more action and less rhetoric. We remain optimistic that the adoption of the outcome of this meeting and the global compacts will be the continuation of positive, creative and balanced responses to migration that serve all of humankind, indeed all of us together.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now give the floor to Mr. Peter Maurer, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Mr. Maurer (International Committee of the Red Cross): The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) welcomes this summit and the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) adopted this morning. The Declaration commits States to treating every individual migrant and refugee with humanity. It also recalls the high standards of international law governing their protection and assistance.

That dual commitment to humanity and law is fundamental. Every day, in different parts of the world, the ICRC sees at first hand the suffering that pushes people to flee their homes in search of safety and living conditions where they are able to meet their basic needs. The majority of people who are forcibly displaced stay in their own countries and are therefore not refugees. The internally displaced, of whom there are 41 million today, have not crossed a State border. Most refugees are hosted in countries neighbouring the locations of today's armed conflicts.

A family's decision to leave is always tragic. People have lost so much. They are desperate. They no longer see any future in the place that has been their family's home for generations. Once they are forced to move, their journey's path is paved with insecurity. Migrants risk being detained. Families are separated. Relatives go missing. The initial tragedy meets more tragedy.

The truth is that unrestrained violence and violations of international humanitarian law are one of the main drivers of forced displacement. Parties to armed conflicts — be they State or non-State actors — attack indiscriminately, detain arbitrarily, torture, rape, forcibly displace millions of people, and unlawfully destroy homes, hospitals and schools. Or, as happened again, just this afternoon in Syria, they attack those who help, as illustrated by the brutal attack on a Syrian Arab Red Crescent convoy. The cumulative impact of such violence means that people may no longer be able to access basic services or maintain a sustainable livelihood.

In places not experiencing armed conflicts, chronic violence also triggers displacement. Homicide, sexual violence and intimidation force people to move and prevent investment in basic services and safe access to schools and clinics. To address the root causes of large-scale movements of migrants, we must therefore work together towards better respect for international humanitarian law, human rights law, refugee law and other legal frameworks that protect people from the effects of violence. And in responding to their needs, States must make sure the policies they pursue do not generate additional suffering. "Do no harm" is a critical principle.

Policymakers should listen to affected individuals and communities, and solutions ought to be found together. Otherwise, migrants will be pushed into situations of unnecessary dependency when what they need most, once their basic protection needs are met, is support in becoming or remaining self-reliant.

The ICRC and its partners in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement are comprehensively engaged in humanitarian work with migrants at every stage of their journey. We have valuable knowledge, expertise and resources to inform State policy and practice in easing their suffering. We look forward to contributing this experience to the compacts that States will agree within the next two years.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now give the floor to Mr. Michael Spindelegger, Director General of the International Centre for Migration Policy Development.

Mr. Spindelegger (International Centre for Migration Policy Development): It has already been stated several times today that the international community is currently facing the worst refugee crisis since the Second World War. The exceptionally high numbers of people in need of protection also imply that no single country or small group of States can fulfil the obligation to protect, assist and integrate without broad international support. They also dash any hopes that States that do not engage solutions in the beginning will not have to do so at a later stage.

People will move on in search of safe places and humane conditions if they do not find them at their first refuge. And modern communications technology and means of transportation will help them reach destinations quite distant from immediate conflict zones. That is a lesson that European States had to learn during last year's long summer of migration.

But we must not forget that, despite the refugee crisis, the majority of migration flows still involve other types of movement, and it is safe to say that many sectors of the economies and societies both in countries of destination and origin would no longer function without the valuable contributions made by international migrants. However, too many of them have to reach their destinations in an irregular and dangerous way, are vulnerable to exploitation, work under inhumane conditions or face prejudice, xenophobia and discrimination. And all of this happens in a world that is increasingly interlinked and dependent on constant exchanges of talent, skills and know-how.

Today's challenges are global, and today's opportunities are too. The challenges require global responses based on joint responsibility, and the opportunities will be harnessed only when the vision of safe, orderly and regular migration becomes a realistic option for everyone.

The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) is a remarkable and crucial step in the development of a new and global framework for the protection of refugees and for managing migration better and more safely. It reflects a change in thinking whereby the protection of refugees and displaced people is no longer seen as a concern only for countries close to conflict or situated along migratory routes, but

as one that the global community has to respond to, act and support as a whole, regardless of where a crisis emerges. The Declaration also reflects new thinking when it stresses that such global responses must take into account the varying capacities and resources that States have at their disposal. None should stand aside altogether, but neither should any be overburdened.

Last but not least, the Declaration emphasizes an understanding of safe, orderly and regular migration as an asset not only for individual migrants and their families, but also for the States, economies and societies that benefit significantly from such movements.

Despite that, however, the Declaration can only be a first step towards reaching those goals, one that must be followed by many others if we are to protect those in need and relieve the countries currently bearing the brunt of the global refugee crisis.

It is a great achievement that the 193 States Members of the United Nations have worked together to make strong commitments regarding refugees and migrants and that they acknowledge their shared responsibility for managing migratory movements in a humane, sensitive, compassionate and people-centred manner, as called for by the Declaration. But the greatest achievement may lie in the fact that States Members of the United Nations will continue to take very concrete steps towards its practical implementation.

The adoption of global compacts on refugees and on safe, orderly and regular migration by 2018 will be living proof of Member States' ability to turn words into action and overcome the implementation gap. The next two years will be decisive in this regard, and the International Centre for Migration Policy Development stands ready to support its member States and all of its international friends and partners in that important process.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Iyad Ameen Madani, Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

Mr. Madani (Organization of Islamic Cooperation): According to the most recent *Global Trends* report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the 57 member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) have to grapple with around 37.7 million refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), representing two thirds of the world's total. And, if we take into account one of the oldest conflict-and-refugee crises in the world, that involving the 5.2 million Palestinian refugees registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, more than 70 per cent of the world's forcibly displaced people are from OIC member States.

The Islamic world has always been extremely generous in hosting refugees. That is not unusual, since generosity is an integral part of our Islamic traditions and values, which are totally compatible with the principles of our modern-day international refugee law. In that context, I would like to make eight brief points.

First, in order to end the suffering of millions of refugees, we have to be more effective in our quest to address the root causes of protracted refugee situations and to achieve durable solutions for them around the world. The humanitarian system cannot continue indefinitely paying the price for political failure to resolve conflicts.

Second, it is incumbent upon us to be more proactive in preventing and resolving crises before they get out of control.

Third, gaining access to and protecting refugees and IDPs continues to be a huge challenge in many crisis situations, and that requires effective solutions that respect for international humanitarian law.

Fourth, the international humanitarian system needs reform if it is to be able to respond more effectively to the growing refugee challenges and ensure that the responsibility for and burden of hosting refugees is more equitably shared among the members of the international community. Meanwhile, adequate support must be provided to the countries that bear the brunt of today's refugee crisis. Seven of the ten largest countries hosting refugees today are OIC member States and are carrying more than their fair share of the global refugee burden.

Fifth, we should find ways to empower refugees economically and reduce the burden on host communities, while ensuring that these communities are not negatively affected.

Sixth, durable solutions for refugees should be based on voluntary return, hopefully in a context of peace. Wherever possible and feasible, settlement elsewhere, or integration, could also be pursued.

Seventh, we must work together effectively to deal with the negative policies, attitudes, racism and xenophobia directed at refugees.

Eighth, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will be undermined if the international community does not accord large movements of refugees and migrants the priority they deserve.

As an international community, we have to admit that we have failed millions and millions of refugees around the world and that we have to do much, much better. The OIC will strive to play a more active and effective role in reducing the suffering of refugees and displaced persons and will strengthen its partnership with the United Nations system, particularly the UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration, as well as with other partners, in order to achieve our common objectives in the face of this important humanitarian challenge.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Lhou Lmarbouh, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean.

Mr. Lmarbouh (Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean, of which I have the honour to be President, I am grateful for this opportunity to enable the voice of the Parliamentary Assembly to be heard at today's important meeting devoted to one of the Mediterranean region's major problems.

The Mediterranean, cradle of civilizations, has today become an immense cemetery for thousands of men, women and children who risk their lives fleeing destitution and despair, wars and violence. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean has long stated through its parliamentary platform that this tragic phenomenon requires a new, more coherent approach, one based in responsibility-sharing and solidarity, not only as it relates to hosting those in need, but also with regard to the very root of the phenomenon.

Supporting refugees and migrants is an important responsibility. The international community must act and help the countries on the front lines, such as, in our region, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Italy and Greece, but also North African countries, particularly Morocco, whose new migration and refugee policy we welcome, as it has become a host country that has regularized the status of tens of thousands of refugees. The flow of refugees will not stop until a lasting solution is found for the many hotbeds of tension and war zones in the Mediterranean. The international community is called to take action to that end.

The flow of migrants will only increase if the countries of the southern Mediterranean and the Sahel, which we now consider to be a region of immediate proximity to the Mediterranean, do not achieve economic and social development. Europe and international bodies are called to take action to that end.

Finally, we would like to call the General Assembly's attention to another type of immigration that is a threat to our region, namely, immigration resulting from climate change. We place all our hopes in the twenty-second Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Marrakesh, Morocco in a few weeks, to begin to slow down climate change. Otherwise, we will be forced to deal with climate-induced immigration of people in the millions, indeed in the millions and not the thousands that we see today.

As an example of the new threat of climate-induced immigration, we cite Lake Chad, the water supply of the subregion of sub-Saharan Africa and the Sahel. Lake Chad has been losing surface area every year due, clearly, to drought and global warming. That has had an impact on a population of over 150 million inhabits, which according to experts will double soon. Therefore, if there is no economic development or if the change in climate trends is not reversed, then the population of that region will inexorably go to Europe through the Mediterranean.

The President: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Joe Thomas, Executive Director of Partners in Population and Development.

Mr. Thomas (Partners in Population and Development): Let me congratulate the General Assembly for adopting the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1), during this high-level meeting on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants. Partners in Population and Development (PPD), an inter-governmental alliance of 26 developing countries representing more than half of the world population, fully endorses the New York Declaration. We wish to place on the record our appreciation for a successful and inclusive process of intergovernmental negotiations leading to the

adoption of a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration.

The history of civilization is founded on population mobility. People move from one place to another for many reasons, including better economic opportunities or to escape violence, poverty, food insecurity, persecution, discrimination, terrorism or human rights violations. Today human mobility is growing at a faster rate than the world's population. In 2015 alone the number surpassed 244 million.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development fully recognizes the positive contribution made by migrants for inclusive growth and sustainable development. The benefits and opportunities of safe, orderly and regular migration are substantial but often underestimated. Large transnational movements of refugees and migrants have political, economic, social, developmental and humanitarian ramifications. The complex challenges emanating from forced displacement and irregular migration in large movements are visible in many parts of the world today.

Those global phenomena call for global approaches and global solutions and require the collective commitment and action of nations. No one State can manage such movements on its own. Neighbouring or transit countries, mostly developing countries, are disproportionately affected. Their capacities have been severely stretched in many cases, affecting their own social and economic cohesion and development. On the other hand, desperate refugees and migrants are forced to take great risks, embarking on perilous journeys, which many may not survive.

The PPD strongly reaffirms that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights and that everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law. Despite our obligations under international law — which prohibit discrimination of any kind on the basis of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, or national or social origin — increasingly xenophobic and racist responses to refugees and migrants are commonly experienced in many parts of the world. We strongly condemn acts and manifestations of racism, social discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance against refugees and migrants.

We acknowledge the Assembly's commitment to mainstreaming a gender perspective, promoting gender equality and empowering all women and girls, while fully respecting and protecting their human rights. The PPD reaffirms its commitment to working with member countries to combat sexual and gender-based violence to the greatest extent possible and to facilitate access to sexual and reproductive health-care services.

The New York Declaration underlines the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination against refugees and migrant women and girls. Recognizing the significant contribution and leadership of women in refugee and migrant communities, it urges the international community to work towards ensuring their full, equal and meaningful participation in this effort. The PPD also urges all countries to address the vulnerabilities of migrants and refugees to HIV and their specific health-care needs, including sexual and reproductive health needs, and to develop local solutions and opportunities to respond to these challenges. The global community must commit to combating xenophobia, racism and discrimination in our societies against refugees and migrants and take measures to improve their integration and inclusion, as appropriate, with particular reference to access to education, health care, justice and language training.

Partners in Population and Development is fully committed to the spirit of the New York Declaration, as it would foster intergovernmental efforts in pushing the agenda for the adoption of a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration. Furthermore, we will facilitate that commitment in the framework of South-South partnerships through greater support for capacity-building, encouraging commodity and technology transfer, policy and advocacy dialogue, knowledge-sharing, and developing partnerships and population diplomacy.

The President: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Ernesto Samper Pizano, Secretary-General of the Union of South American Nations.

Mr. Samper Pizano (Union of South American Nations) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are gathered here in New York as the topic of migrants and refugees has become a worldwide humanitarian tragedy. It is not only a matter of Syrian migrants that have taken over international headlines, but also those expelled from Kenya towards the Sudan, Palestinians expelled by Israel, Latinos turned back at the United States border, Cubans crossing South America to reach American soil and become citizens and millions of Haitians abandoned to their fates.

Regrettably, the response to the movement of anxious migrants throughout the world, which is under 3 per cent of the world's population, has often led to security measures, new concentration camps, immigration police, unreachable areas and walls. Accursed walls, like the Berlin Wall, are being built to signal hostility between territories, as we saw during wars in the Middle Ages. The Mexican wall, the Israeli wall and the Moroccan wall are all examples of walls that are as solid and hard as the souls that ordered them to be built. They are walls that divide and kill us. Walls are the most recent expression of a strategy that reflects scant humanitarian regard for immigrants that begins with temporary restrictions at customs and ends with police measures that treat them like criminals and divide and destroy their families.

It is clear that the forced migration of migrants displaced by violence from my country, Colombia, for example, or of refugees and asylum seekers, victims of human trafficking and those fleeing the catastrophic effects of global warming and wars, is the result of phenomena in which human beings have played a part. In addition to the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration that is being launched to address that phenomenon, we need another approach that views global migration as a right and not a concession, with migrants as citizens of the world and not as global offenders. In a globalized environment in which the free movement of goods, services and capital exists, the possibility of the free movement of people should also exist.

In the Union of South American Nations, we are attempting to deepen the concept of South American citizenship so that it is recognized as a right — a right to mobility for 430 million South Americans, 63 per cent of whom wish to migrate or move elsewhere within their region. That cannot be considered to be regular migratory flows but rather as the legitimate expression of a community that lives in a large house and wants to move around in it.

In sum, we welcome international regulations that seek to reduce the causes of migration and regulate the movement of people in a humane manner. Such regulations must fall within the broad scope of global citizenship that allows people to take part in globalization, which today is much too focused on money, products, services and technology, and very little on social issues and the mobility of human beings.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Narinder Kakar, Permanent Observer of the University for Peace.

Mr. Kakar (University for Peace): As is abundantly clear to us, the movement of refugees and migrants across international borders has reached unprecedented levels. Innocent people are compelled to flee their homes due to conflicts and life-threatening situations. At the same time, large movements are also taking place in order for people to seek better economic and social opportunities elsewhere, but the journeys of such people can be fraught with peril. Appalling tales of tragedies are featured daily in the headlines. It is time for the international community to agree on an effective response to this crisis.

The international community must come together in a spirit of shared responsibility for the world's refugees and migrants. More countries must resettle more people who have been forced from their homes. Everyone everywhere must stand up against the animosity that so many refugees, migrants and minority communities face. The international community must mobilize sufficient resources to tackle this crucial problem.

The challenge is one we can and must tackle together. In the first instance, we must make every effort to prevent conflict from erupting and maintain peace. To achieve that goal, we must put to use one of the greatest and most effective means of ennobling and transforming human beings, namely, education. Education plays an important role in our lives in achieving and maintaining peace.

The conditions in which refugees live vary from well established camps and collective centres to makeshift shelters or no shelters at all. Half of them live in urban areas and many of them have achieved some degree of education, ranging from secondary school to undergraduate and even graduate studies. However, the majority of refugees have very little to no opportunities when it comes to higher education. That point was highlighted by the young man who spoke this morning in the opening plenary on behalf of civil society and by the Foreign Minister of Qatar (see A/71/PV.3 and A/71/PV.4 A, respectively).

Most donor support comes in the form of humanitarian assistance to meet basic needs, relegating education for human development and conflict prevention and resolution to a secondary plane. As members are aware, the University for Peace was

established pursuant to resolution 35/55 to provide humankind with an international institution of higher education for peace and with the aim of promoting the spirit of understanding, tolerance and peaceful coexistence among all human beings. To that end, apart from its economic and training programmes, the University has created a scholarship fund to provide post-graduate education on matters of peace, conflict resolution and transformation, and security-related issues for approximately 100 refugees per year at its campus in San José, Costa Rica.

In 2013-2014, for example, the University for Peace successfully organized a pilot programme aimed at refugees, which was carried out with the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees. The thematic focus of the programme is academic training on peace, conflict and security-related issues, including human rights, gender issues and peacebuilding. The programme aims at providing refugees with the knowledge and practical skills necessary for finding and implementing durable solutions to the challenges they will face in host countries as well as in their countries of origin. It serves to strengthen the capacities of refugees and internally displaced persons by providing them with expertise in peace-related issues that contributes to meaningful and effective dialogue and in dealing with the complex challenges facing today's globalized society.

Lastly, there is an urgent need to make funding for humanitarian needs, in general, and for education, in particular, more predictable and sustainable at levels much higher than those that prevail today. The global community must realize that it is absolutely essential that adequate funding be provided in a timely manner for conflict-prevention efforts, meeting the needs of refugees and internally displaced persons, and making education available to those with refugee status, if we are to succeed in alleviating the human crisis.

The University for Peace is at the disposal of the United Nations system and the international community to support the work of the Organization, pursuant to the mandate given to it by the General Assembly.

The Acting Co-Chair: I call on the representative of Singapore in explanation of position.

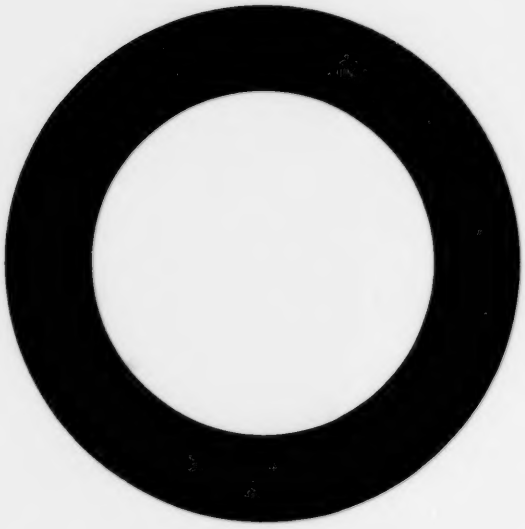
Mr. Teo (Singapore): The President of the General Assembly, in the interests of time, encouraged delegations this morning to deliver any explanations of position after the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1), as part of their national statements in this plenary meeting. In this context, my delegation is taking the floor now in explanation of position after the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants and its annexes.

Singapore welcomes the adoption of the landmark New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. As we continue to find durable solutions to deal with large movements of refugees and migrants, we must acknowledge that individual States vary in their circumstances and capacities to respond to this important issue. As the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has noted, there can be no one-size-fits-all approach.

We welcome the fact that the New York Declaration affirms that the commitments undertaken should take into account differing national realities, capacities and levels of development, and should respect national policies and priorities, as stated in paragraph 21 of the Declaration. It follows that any commitment to action in the Declaration and its annexes to address large movements of refugees and migrants should also be consistent with the rights and obligations of States under international law.

The Acting Co-Chair: We have heard the last speaker inscribed on the list. I thank all participants for their insightful contributions to the high-level meeting. The level of participation is an indication of the importance that Member States accord to the issue of addressing large movements of refugees and migrants.

The meeting rose at 6.35 p.m.



United Nations A/71/PV.6 B

General Assembly

Seventy-first session

Official Records

6th plenary meeting
Monday, 19 September 2016, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Thomson ..... (Fiji)

In the absence of the Co-Chair, Mr. El Haycen (Mauritania), Acting Co-Chair, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

High-level plenary meeting on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants

Agenda items 13 and 117 (*continued*)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*) : I now call on His Excellency Mr. Gennadiy Gatilov, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Gatilov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): There are more than 65 million forced migrants in the world today, which makes the issue before this high-level meeting increasingly important. We share the view that the most reliable way of successfully tackling the refugee issue is to eliminate the root causes that force people to flee their homelands.

We believe that in order to successfully respond to present-day migration challenges, it is above all necessary to politically prevent and settle conflicts. We need to coordinate the efforts of the international community in the political, socioeconomic, humanitarian and other areas and to safeguard safety and security and human rights and forge contacts between humanitarian assistance and development assistance.

We also need to preclude foreign intervention in the domestic affairs of other States. We believe that today's difficult migration situation is largely a consequence of irresponsible intervention in the domestic affairs of sovereign States in the Middle East and North Africa aimed at destabilizing them and forcibly ousting inconvenient Governments. That has caused the collapse of States, humanitarian disasters, civil wars and an increase in terrorism, and has made living conditions there unbearable owing to the threats to human life. All of that, in conjunction with the violation of fundamental human rights, has caused mass flows of refugees and migrants from the Middle East and North Africa. We believe that the States that actively contribute to such interventions must bear the primary and greatest responsibility for delivering assistance to victims, refugees and forced migrants.

We believe that, in order to tackle the migration problems in Europe, there needs to be political agreement in the countries of origin of migrants. There also needs to be assistance for socioeconomic development and State-building. Millions of people need peace, calm and confidence in the future. That can be achieved through civil reconciliation in Syria, Libya and other countries in the Middle East and North Africa and by combating terrorism in that region. We view attempts to promote the concept of responsibility-sharing as an attempt to shift the burden of responsibility to others' shoulders. We stress the counterproductivity of such approaches.

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We would furthermore stress that the Russian Federation supports the international refugee protection regime, at the heart of which is the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol. Russia provides political assistance, and we have made donations to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. We provide significant amounts of humanitarian assistance to the countries of origin of refugees. We have also hosted and accommodated refugees in Russia, including more than 1 million forced migrants from Ukraine.

We need to do everything possible to preclude the possibility of foreign terrorists entering countries together with those who actually require assistance. It is inadmissible for refugees to be targeted by political manipulation or by forces stoking religious and social hatred, and especially for refugee camps to be used for the recruitment and military training of fighters. We believe that approaches to overcome migration problems should include providing protection to refugees. Such measures must be in line with the core principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, and they must also respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States.

We have heard the statements made here by the representatives of Georgia (see A/71/PV.4 B) and Ukraine (see A/71/PV.4 A). Their statements included unjustified accusations levied against Russia. Given the time constraints, I would simply note that the aim of such statements is clear, namely, to shift the blame for the situation in order to justify criminal policies that have forced thousands of people to flee their homes, and to attempt to conceal their unwillingness to undertake tangible measures to remedy the situation.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Yerzhan Ashikbayev, Deputy Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan.

Mr. Ashikbayev (Kazakhstan): Kazakhstan recognizes the global nature of the challenges associated with people on the move and fully supports the leading role of the United Nations in crafting a multilateral strategy to deal with refugee and migration flows.

My country has had its own experience of being a destination for millions of migrants and internally displaced people. Before and during the Second World War, Kazakhstan was a place where various ethnic groups were ordered to resettle. We also experienced several waves of labour migration from other parts of the former Soviet Union resulting from major industrial and agricultural developments. We know the real meaning of humanity and compassion. Thanks to the balanced and responsible policy pursued by President Nursultan Nazarbayev, my country is a dynamic, multi-ethnic society with more than 100 ethnic groups living in peace. That is one of the greatest achievements of our 20 years of independence.

My country has a sound record of collaboration with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). In 2010, we adopted a law on refugees that ensures the protection of their rights and dignity. Refugees enjoy the same rights as citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan. All refugee children are enrolled in quality educational institutions. A national action plan has been put in place to address human trafficking. As a member of the Eurasian Economic Union, we treat migration from neighbouring countries in an inclusive way that contributes to the growth and development of Kazakhstan as well as to the growth and development of our neighbours.

In order to synergize regional and international efforts, Kazakhstan, in cooperation with UNHCR and IOM, initiated in 2011 the regional consultative process called the Almaty Process on Refugee Protection and International Migration. It aims to address the multiple challenges resulting from the dynamics of mixed migration and thereby enhance regional cooperation through dialogue.

We are of the view that the situation in and around Afghanistan should remain the focus of constant international attention. For our part, we are investing more than $50 million in educating Afghan students, building schools and hospitals and providing humanitarian assistance. Together with Japan, we recently helped start a project to improve the nation's civil-service capacity, with a special emphasis on gender equality.

We believe that an effective response to the ongoing humanitarian crisis needs to be grounded in an understanding of the root causes of displacement. Armed conflicts, persecution and violence, climate change and underdevelopment are among the chief factors causing refugee flows. We particularly stress the importance of such principles as mutual respect and non-interference. Neglecting those principles is a factor that contributes to the destruction of the sovereignty

and statehood of affected States and aggravates current humanitarian crises.

We welcome the adoption today of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1). That document, along with the Secretary-General's campaign to counter xenophobia, is deeply rooted in our universal principles regarding human rights and our commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We hope that it will become a basis for further action and deliver vital changes for millions of people. We also welcome the signing of an agreement between the United Nations and the IOM. Strengthening the institutional relationship between those two organizations is an important element in overcoming the current crisis.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Kazakhstan's strong commitment and political will to leave no one behind in addressing the issues of migrants and refugees.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Linas Linkevičius, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Lithuania.

Mr. Linkevičius (Lithuania): I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this important meeting. I also thank the representatives of Jordan and Ireland for their tremendous work in facilitating the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1), which we adopted today.

It is important that that Declaration provides a pragmatic and realistic basis for our collective action in tackling the pressing phenomenon of the mass movements of migrants and refugees. We face the biggest refugee and migration crisis in modern history. No country of origin is able to respond on its own. Only through collective responsibility-sharing can we provide adequate assistance to people in immediate need. Our response must be global, holistic and comprehensive. Saving lives must be a priority.

Decisive action is needed to destroy smuggling networks and break their business models so that we can put an end to their criminal activities. Lithuania's border guards are actively engaged in the European Union (EU) Frontex joint operations, as well as in the rapid border intervention teams deployed on the Greek islands. Lithuanian police are working together with European colleagues in managing migration flows. We have supplied humanitarian aid through the EU civil protection mechanism. However, despite our efforts and goodwill, the phenomenon of mass migration will not be eradicated without responsibly addressing the root causes of displacement.

Conflict prevention, the promotion of good governance, the rule of law and accountability, respect for human rights, job creation and economic opportunities must be at the core of all of our actions. In particular, it is urgent to address the armed conflicts and insecurity that send people fleeing from their homes. The international community should redouble its efforts regarding conflict prevention and mediation as part of peacekeeping. Lithuania remains committed to continuing to contribute to that end.

Refugees and migrants do not need our charity. When given the right opportunities, they will make positive contributions to their host nations. More investment in social cohesion and the full integration of migrants can have significant social and economic benefits for development. We need to strengthen our efforts by including initiatives especially focused on women and youth in order to offer them the opportunities they need to fulfil their potential.

In conclusion, let me express the hope that 2016 will stand out as the year when we stepped up with responsibility-sharing and not responsibility-shifting. We hope that this high-level meeting will provide historic opportunities to improve the lives of millions of people. We must not fail them. Furthermore, we look forward to acting on our commitment to develop global compacts on the topic by 2018, another important milestone in developing a clear framework for a global response and enhanced international cooperation.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Shaw Kgathi, Minister of Defence, Justice, and Security of Botswana.

Mr. Kgathi (Botswana): I bring greetings from the people of Botswana as we prepare to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of our independence on 30 September. I am greatly honoured to address the General Assembly on the matter of the large movements of refugees and migrants taking place across the globe.

I am aware that this issue has become increasingly urgent, distressing and life-threatening, particularly for those who are affected, especially women, children and persons with disabilities. I have had an opportunity to appreciate the outcome document of

this high-level meeting to address large movements of refugees and migrants. Let me commend Member States for the excellent work put into the development of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1), which was adopted this morning. My delegation and I support the proposed migration survey programme, which I believe will generate a clearer understanding of the demographics of migration and the large-scale movement phenomenon.

In general, poor governance structures and the resulting social inequalities, poverty, military conflict and disasters are often significant causes of the large movements of persons. For its part, Botswana has played a role in providing refuge to asylum seekers by affording protection and dignity for all those displaced from other Southern African countries and broader sub-Saharan Africa during the liberation struggles in the early 1960s. Botswana currently hosts 2,123 refugees. My Government, in collaboration with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, provides protection in terms of shelter, health and public education. Like all countries, Botswana is doing its best in terms of the development and implementation of protection policies consistent with the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees to insure that refugees live their lives in safety and dignity.

Migration and the movement of people across the globe require regional, continental and, above all, global consensus to solve the problem. The current trends in migration require that Governments and multinational organizations meet to collectively resolve matters and pool resources together so as to assist the United Nations in its efforts to come up with sustainable solutions to those problems.

It is regrettable to note that the global security environment remains volatile and that all countries are at risk when it comes to terrorism. The continued threat of terrorism across the globe, the economic downturn and the harsh climate-change patterns are individually and collectively leading to increasing pressures on the economies of developing countries in particular. The effects of those pressures are reflected in many parts of the world in rising unemployment, especially among youth, food insecurity and poverty, all of which are often implicated as the primary causes of the migration and displacement of persons across the globe.

My delegation and I believe that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, supported by a global peacebuilding effort and a global campaign against terrorism, will provide the necessary impetus for slowing down the migration and large movements of persons and refugees across the globe. My country stands ready to support all endeavours in that regard.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Milenko Skoknic, Director General for Foreign Affairs of Chile.

Mr. Skoknic (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Chile endorses the report of the Secretary General (A/70/59), which states that the global crisis caused by the mass movements of migrants and refugees demands an urgent response by the international community in order to create lasting solutions in the medium- and short-term and ensure the full enjoyment and exercise of all human rights by refugees and migrants. That response should recognize the multidimensional nature of the phenomenon of international migration with all its political, economic, social, humanitarian and developmental ramifications. In that respect, we should remember the commitments made in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the principle of leaving no one behind.

Chile has not been spared; over the past 10 years we have become a country of migrants. Our official figures show that through 2015, 500,000 migrants were received in our country, mainly coming from Latin America and the Caribbean, with women representing a large share of that number. Thus far in 2016, that process has continued in a dynamic way. In order to respond to that challenge, our Government has worked on designing and implementing a migration policy based on the promotion and application of our commitments in terms of human rights. We have established a council for dealing with migration affairs at the ministerial level, whose mandate is to define a comprehensive national policy on migration. We have developed a presidential instrument that includes guidelines for a policy to strengthen our legislation and practice on migration. The end goal is to generate a national system that gives a multidimensional response to the migration processes in the country.

With regard to refugees, Chile reaffirms its commitment to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol. Our

Government, with support from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, has launched an initiative for the resettlement of Syrian refugees. That effort involves services and support that take into account the special needs of children, families, women and persons with disabilities. The initiative is based on our successful experience in dealing with refugees starting in 2008. We have so far granted certificates of naturalization to 45 Palestinian children, who have been resettled with their families. Regionally, especially through our participation as a non-permanent member of the Security Council in 2014 and 2015, we have strengthened rapid humanitarian access for providing humanitarian assistance to communities affected by humanitarian crises.

Chile supports the Nansen Initiative and its agenda of protecting displaced persons across borders in the context of disasters and climate change. Regionally, we have promoted the concept of international migration governance through the South American Conference on Migration as well as through other regional integration processes.

Lastly, we hope that this meeting will help us find innovative solutions aimed at providing assistance to displaced persons and refugees. Chile joins other United Nations Members in supporting the instruments agreed upon by the Organization and the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1), adopted this morning, which establishes a framework for effective global cooperation on the basis of solidarity backed by our renewed commitment to international humanitarian law.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on the representative of New Zealand.

Mr. Van Bohemen (New Zealand): New Zealand welcomes the timely report of the Secretary-General on refugees and migrants (A/70/59) and its call for a new and comprehensive framework to address large movements of refugees and migrants.

The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) that we adopted this morning is a critical step, but it is only a first step. Innovative solutions and agreement on concrete outcomes are required. We must look to greater and earlier investment in conflict prevention and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to address the root causes of the current unprecedented flows of irregular migration.

As we have heard today, mass movements of vulnerable people cause untold disruption, despair and devastation for individuals, communities and countries, for the refugees and as the recipient communities which absorb them. The challenges are complex and multifaceted, and we have a shared responsibility to manage irregular migration flows in a collaborative and comprehensive manner, with full respect for international law.

New Zealand is committed to doing our bit. We will continue to work with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the international community to find protection solutions for the most vulnerable people and to resettle refugees under our refugee quota programme, the size of which we are increasing.

In our own region, New Zealand is committed to strengthening cooperation and the capacity to address irregular migration, in particular through the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime.

In March, ministers endorsed a landmark Bali Declaration. It acknowledges the growing scale and complexity of irregular migration challenges and aims to reinforce regional long-term strategies, dismantle criminal human trafficking and smuggling syndicates, and expand legal, safe and affordable migration pathways.

In the Pacific, the potential for future climate-induced migration is of real concern. New Zealand has endorsed the Nansen Initiative on disaster-induced cross-border displacement and the Platform on Disaster Displacement.

New Zealand will continue to play our part as we work towards the adoption of global compacts on refugees and migrants that are meaningful, ambitious and based upon legal obligations and standards, and which harness the key commitments on forced displacement made at the World Humanitarian Summit earlier this year.

We will also do our best in our remaining months in the Security Council to spur the Council to take more effective steps to address the crises in Syria, Libya, South Sudan and elsewhere, which to a very large extent are driving the problem we are discussing today.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now call on the representative of Cambodia.

Mr. Tuy (Cambodia): At the outset, I wish to express our wholehearted appreciation to President Peter Thomson and to the President of the General Assembly at its seventieth session, Mr. Mogens Lykketoft, for having convened this important high-level plenary meeting on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants, as per resolution 70/539. It symbolizes the collective effort by the international community to secure commitments for assistance and to strengthen closer cooperation and more responsibility-sharing.

Refugees, migrants and movements of people are not a new phenomenon. They are an integral part of human history. Today's global trends have grown negative, and refugees and migrants are daily subject to discrimination and xenophobia. They are frustrated and are often the victims of emotional or psychological trauma. Responses to large movements of refugees and migrants have been minimal, since we seem to be reluctant to address them, partly because of the diverse political interests involved.

I believe that the more we leave them to endure suffering and challenges, the more we will bear the negative impact of the problem, as we can see heart-breaking images in the media, including footage of the exodus of refugees and their rejection by States.

Every year we observe International Migrants Day on 18 December, which indicates that these issues have become international. It is recognized that collective efforts are necessary that involve Member States and all Government and non-governmental partners.

While we are thinking about the current outflow of refugees and migrants, we should look at the root causes of their forced displacement from their countries of origin, including countries in conflict, or else we will fail to address the problem permanently. In this context, political commitments should be at the forefront, followed by the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.

My delegation advocates the way forward as outlined in the outcome document (resolution 71/1) adopted by Heads of State and Government and high representatives, in particular in the context of the intergovernmental negotiations that will begin in 2017. This would lay a good foundation for reviewing today's comments. We have to ensure that we do not wind up this meeting with commitments alone, without a path laid down to realize our goals.

In this sense, my delegation is confident that international cooperation is the only way forward. The outcome document, or New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, that we have adopted here today will serve as a catalyst for our collective commitments, translated into action along the lines of the basic principles of international refugee law, human rights law, humanitarian law and responsibility-sharing measures.

Three decades ago, owing to civil war, Cambodia had an outflow of refugees, and in July 1979 the then Secretary-General of the United Nations convened an international conference in Geneva on refugees and displaced persons in South-East Asia. The decision of that conference successfully averted the immediate crisis through what amounted to a three-way agreement between the countries of origin, the countries of first asylum and the countries of resettlement, while the ASEAN countries promised to uphold their commitment by establishing regional centres. We take this opportunity to thank the United Nations, its Member States and relevant organizations for assisting and resettling Cambodian refugees and their voluntary return to the country through an integration process.

Given the emerging trend of refugees and migrants, we can understand the suffering involved and the refugees' need for resettlement based on their will.

Refugees and migrants do not always create problems in the countries where they have found sanctuary. They contribute to the development of an economic and social impetus in the countries in which they live by contributing to the work force.

My delegation notes with interest that Member States have come together to address the burning issue of refugees on a wide scale. We look forward to the implementation of the proposed comprehensive response framework, which would form a solid basis for establishing a more coordinated approach and more equitably addressing the enduring refugee crisis as well as future large-scale movements of refugees.

In a nutshell, refugee and migration issues should be dealt with through systematic expanded settlement schemes involving the provision of educational skills, ability skills and capacity-building opportunities, as well as mobility, family reunions and other pathways to integration into society.

For its part, the Royal Government of Cambodia is committed to strengthening global governance of migration. We therefore warmly welcome the agreement to bring the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the leading global organization on migration, closer to the United Nations as a related organization. We look forward to the implementation of the agreement, which will assist migrants and help Member States to address migration issues more comprehensively and holistically and will promote greater coherence between migration and related policy domains.

Cambodia also requests IOM to provide technical and secretariat support for the negotiations on developing the future global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration and for the intergovernmental conference to adopt it in 2018. That includes appointing the IOM Director General as the secretary general of that international conference in 2018.

I wish to conclude by expressing our hope that refugees and migrants will receive greater attention, regardless of their origin or their cause for fleeing, as they are bound to experience suffering. That will definitely be in accordance with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as it will leave no one behind, including refugees and migrants.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Igor Crnadak, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr. Crnadak (Bosnia and Herzegovina): It is my great pleasure to take part today in this high-level meeting dedicated to addressing large movements of refugees and migrants. The initiative to organize this summit meeting comes at a time of unprecedented human mobility.

We have witnessed refugees from regions engulfed in armed conflict flooding into Europe. We are all part of the story, whether or not we so intended. It has caused unparalleled tensions among neighbouring States, which has resulted in the construction of barbed-wire and tall metal fences between European countries — something that we believed was a feature of an earlier time. We have witnessed the Schengen Area system abruptly suspended. We have witnessed international railway lines and motorways — the blood vessels of the continent — suddenly closed down. That reflects the importance of today's topic on the international community's agenda. Forced displacement, with its complex, challenging nature, requires not only a humanitarian response, but also a sustainable political solution.

Displacement severely impacts not only individuals and families, but also entire host communities and countries, while introducing an additional element to the phenomenon, namely, a challenge to development. Current approaches to the large-scale movements of displaced populations, internally displaced persons, refugees and asylum seekers have proved inadequate and unsustainable. They have also ignored the need for an improved sharing of the collective responsibility for such populations.

Last year, we adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which was a major step in dealing with one of the main root causes and drivers of the flight of both migrants and refugees. As is well known, the lack of development can be both a trigger for conflict and a driver of people to leave their country in search of a better life. The 2030 Agenda is linked to migration and refugee issues, as it recognizes the importance of addressing forced displacement as a part of sustainable development. Although Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 10.7 is focused on migration, other SDGs focus directly and indirectly on matters related to migrants and refugees, all with a single objective, namely, to leave no one behind. For the millions of displaced persons, refugees and internally displaced persons, not being left behind translates into the ability to return to their homes or to be better integrated into the host community, or settled elsewhere if necessary.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development clearly recognizes the positive contributions that migrants make. Beyond receiving humanitarian assistance and protection, forcibly displaced people must be able to benefit from and contribute to sustainable, long-term development. That will require a rethinking of our operational, policy and financing instruments and approaches at the national, regional and international levels.

As a global phenomenon, migration requires global attention — our attention — since no State can deal with the issue alone. The migration patterns of today have become even more complex, with some people moving permanently and others moving temporarily. Many leave to escape poverty, violence or conflict or

in the aftermath of natural disaster or environmental change.

The first-ever World Humanitarian Summit, which was held in Istanbul earlier this year, provided an opportunity to all stakeholders involved in humanitarian issues to join together around a table to discuss approaches and demonstrate decisive and sustained leadership in several very important parts of the agenda, not the least of which related to the issues of forced displacement. It was a moment for us to act that generated the energy that has been transferred to the present moment. It is therefore important to note that, together with the 2030 Agenda, the Secretary-General's Agenda for Humanity (A/70/709, annex) offers an additional blueprint for change.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina we all agree that migrants and refugees differ in various ways and are regulated by various laws. However, it is important to tackle both issues together in the sense that both categories face similar challenges during displacement and upon arrival in the destination countries. We believe that migration and development issues require greater focus, as do the ways and means of assisting the countries of origin.

Today we have a historic opportunity to commit to addressing the root causes of large movements of refugees and migrants as the cornerstone of our future joint efforts. However, we must also continue sending clear messages that barbed wire, walls, heavy police control and isolation build animosity between neighbouring countries, and therefore have no place in Europe. It is easy to stand behind European values when things are running smoothly and without any problems. We must not forget that refugees choose Europe not only because it offers economic opportunity, but because they view our values as a foundation for their future.

By putting the issue of migrants and refugees at the centre of our agenda, especially the most vulnerable among them, namely, women and children, and, more important, by adopting a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration in 2018, we will deliver the goal of leaving no one behind.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Anis Birou, Minister for Moroccans Abroad and Migration Affairs of Morocco.

Mr. Birou (Morocco) (*spoke in Arabic*): How can we transform fear into hope? How can we transform the choice of a hazardous journey into a choice in favour of life? How can we safeguard the dignity that a migrant or a refugee enjoyed before becoming a refugee because of a war?

Today's meeting represents a political commitment. It is an ethical commitment made for migrants and refugees on the part of all countries. It is a commitment to provide hope and the trust that the humanitarian values we share have not died. The international community must therefore translate them into acts and deeds. We expect action, as that is the way to fight ignorance, violence, racism and xenophobia.

My country, Morocco, has become a stable country after being a transit country. It has provided hope to tens of thousands of refugees, thanks to the vision of our King. My country has adopted a migration policy that is based on human rights, a humanitarian approach, comprehensive values and shared responsibility. It calls for an international approach to migration. The policy has been transformed into a special programme to assist tens of thousands of refugees from several countries, especially from sub-Saharan Africa.

We have also adopted a comprehensive integration programme. It is structured with a focus on providing education to all refugee children. It provides not only education, but also support so as to ensure their success in school, and they benefit from full medical services. We have provided technical programmes and have followed up on those and other programmes. The policy has also provided a comprehensive toolkit on legal matters. Our Parliament has adopted laws on human trafficking and on migration. Our policy also focuses on humanitarian considerations for the benefit of all vulnerable refugees.

Based on its principles and values, the Kingdom of Morocco stresses the need to continue that policy. We also believe that migrants make various contributions to our society, which we highly appreciate. However, my country is deeply concerned about the increase in xenophobia in several host countries, which could increase the suffering of migrants and aggravate self-identification problems.

Morocco is aware of the negative repercussions of climate change. We will therefore ensure a focus on the matter during the climate change conference to be held in Marrakesh in November.

In conclusion, we welcome the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1). Morocco has focussed on refugees and migrants through the adoption of various laws. We will spare no effort to ensure a successful 2017-2018 co-chairmanship, along with Germany, of the international Global Forum on Migration and Development.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now call on Her Excellency Ms. María Andrea Matamoros Castillo, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Honduras.

Ms. Matamoros Castillo (Honduras) (*spoke in Spanish*): About two months ago, a young mother from northern Honduras, struggling to raise her beautiful daughter Jennifer, who was just 12 years old, took the regrettable decision to entrust both of them to a human trafficker, who assured her that now was the time to reach the United States, before an impenetrable wall was built. Filled with false expectations, they left their home and community on a Thursday morning to set out on an irregular migration route. As soon as Saturday, while crossing a river, their raft capsized, and Jennifer lost her life on her birthday.

That is an irreversible tragedy for the family, for Honduras and for humankind more broadly. How is it possible to identify those responsible for what happened, or even the main cause? How can we stop the loss of life on irregular migration routes or prevent people from falling victim to human traffickers or being exploited as they seek better opportunities or flee from violence? Were Jennifer and her mother culprits or were they victims?

The answers are complex and, in attempting to provide them, it must be recalled that migration is not just a passing phenomenon. It is a reality that has always existed and will always exist. Migration is a fundamental and necessary right of human beings, and in large part, as the Director General of the International Organization for Migration rightly stated (see A/71/PV.3), it is not a problem that we should try to resolve but one that we must urgently address.

It is not a question of halting migration, but of eradicating the causes of forced and irregular migration. It requires considering migration from the perspective of global opportunity and development, not of fear. In that regard, Pope Francis has invited us to look at migrants not only in terms of their situation, whether regular or irregular, but essentially as people whose dignity must be protected and who can contribute to the welfare and progress of all.

However, we cannot take full advantage of the benefits generated by cultural exchange, while people continue to undertake dangerous irregular migration journeys, if we do not offer better opportunities for those who are forced to leave their countries. In that regard, we must promote regular, orderly and safe migration, while opening the door to temporary workers, which can be of benefit to both migrants and the countries concerned. We must combat drug trafficking by addressing pre-production and consumption aspects. We must share intelligence and efforts to combat organized crime in all its aspects. We must protect the environment but also ensure resilience to its effects. We must respect the best interests of children and the rights of families. Moreover, we must call for an end to violence, condemn war and the violation of human rights and urge all countries to welcome and protect migrants and refugees, while continuing anti-discrimination efforts.

But let us do that together. We must assume our responsibility and understand that our actions as isolated countries will never equal what we can achieve by working together towards the same goals. An example of that is the Alliance for Prosperity in the Northern Triangle, a partnership among Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala, supported by the United States, which recognizes the responsibility of the member countries for regional migration. The Alliance has identified the main causes of irregular migration and has the commitment of the four countries to generate the necessary opportunities for developing the region, thereby dampening the urge on the part of the populations to go north.

This year, Honduras allocated $1 billion from its national budget to programmes and projects identified by the plan, thereby shouldering its responsibility and achieving significant reductions in irregular migration from Honduras.

However, to date more than 120,000 Honduran citizens have been detained and returned by the United States to Mexico as they tried to travel north in 2015 and 2016, averaging about 6,000 people per month. Those figures take on a different significance when we realize that each number represents a human life — more than 120,000 human stories, hearts, hopes and dreams that are, for the most part, tragedies.

It is no coincidence that we are gathered here today. It is in our hands not only to adopt the decisions that we have before us, but also to implement them, while leaving aside debate and taking action to depoliticize and humanize the migration issue. Above all, the saving of lives, like that of Jennifer, is in our hands.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Faustin Archange Touadera, President of the Central African Republic.

President Touadera (*spoke in French*): Throughout the world, large movements of people have almost become the norm, particularly in Africa, given the extent of that phenomenon on the continent. Such movements all have the same root causes — conflicts, man-made disasters or nature's whims, to put it simply. Large movements of refugees and migrants have always affected countries of origin and destination. My country, the Central African Republic, was for a very long time a land of asylum for refugees and other migrants from neighbouring countries and the rest of the world.

The main consequence of the most recent crisis has been the massive displacement of people within and outside of our country. We recorded as many as 900,000 displaced persons during the crisis. Thousands of women and children were driven out of their usual place of abode, which had immeasurable repercussions on their physical and mental health. Hundreds of families were torn apart, and hundreds of businesses were abandoned. The future of thousands of children was placed in jeopardy, and the dreams of an entire country were shattered.

Large movements of refugees and migrants do not foster development; instead, they foster insecurity, suffering and the loss of dignity. They have undermined economic efforts and led to instability in my country.

Today, in the aftermath of that complex, deep-seated crisis, the Central African Republic, after the restoration of constitutional order, has made a decisive turn towards national reconciliation.

The international community should assist all countries in general, and African countries in particular, in combating the root causes of large movements of refugees and migrants, as stipulated in the Action Plan of the 2015 Valletta Summit on Migration. That Plan also makes provisions for, inter alia, reducing poverty, promoting peace and governance, and providing opportunities.

I take the opportunity offered by this forum to thank the international community for the multifaceted support given to my country during challenging times. I call for the Action Plan be implemented so as to enable African countries to prevent conflicts and man-made crises and reduce the risks of natural disasters. That support should also help Governments in their efforts to implement strategies to return refugees, because post-conflict States are generally weakened and the non-return of refugees or a poor return strategy could spark yet another conflict.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now call on Mr. François Beya Kasonga, Director-General of the Office of Migration of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Mr. Kasonga (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): It is a great honour to take the floor on behalf of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo at this summit meeting on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants. Our country has ratified all of the conventions relevant to protecting refugees, and it respects international law, refugee law and the principle of non-refoulement. Since its independence, it has opened its doors each time to groups of people or individuals who request asylum in its territory.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo has paid a heavy price for hosting some of the largest communities of refugees in the world — more than 2 million Rwandan refugees in the middle of the 1990s, following the 1994 genocide in Rwanda; hundreds of thousands of Angolans during their struggle for independence; the wave of South Sudanese refugees while that country struggled to gain its independence; and, more recently, because of civil wars in those countries, thousands of Burundian refugees, thousands of Central African refugees and refugees of other nationalities. Parts of our land were devastated when armed groups from foreign countries entered the country, and local populations suffered retaliation at the hands of those armed groups. Economic development was crippled by the impact of the thousands of refugees, and security remains a major challenge in the east of the country.

In the wake of such events, the large-scale internal displacement of almost 2 million people has become part of the landscape in certain areas of the country.

That has caused the flight of 500,000 of our fellow countrymen and women, who are now refugees abroad. Moreover, we have noted that the principle of shared responsibility in responding to such large movements of refugees and internally displaced persons has not been respected by the international community. I might recall that it was the international community that ordered a humanitarian corridor to be opened to facilitate the entry of refugees and armed men.

The lack of funding prevents the implementation of sustainable solutions with regard to repatriation, the local integration of refugees or the viability of the areas to which the refugees and internally displaced return. Because of that regrettable experience, the Democratic Republic of the Congo welcomes the global response framework for refugees advocated by the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1), adopted by this summit to respond to large-scale refugee flows and the protracted situation. We commend the fact that this framework brings together all stakeholders as well as local and national authorities and underscores the duty to respond to the needs of the local host communities.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo supports those commitments, including the provision of greater support for countries and communities that host the largest numbers of refugees. As noted during the crisis involving European countries, the responsibility can no longer be shouldered solely by the African host countries. That is in line with the 1951 Refugee Convention, signed in Geneva, which stipulates in its preamble that international protection cannot be effective without States sharing responsibility for the burden caused by hosting thousands of people on their territory. That is why the Democratic Republic of the Congo calls for the genuine and effective implementation in African countries with limited resources of the principles concerning protection for refugees and assistance to host States. It is a common responsibility to be shared by the international community.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Djibouti.

Mr. Youssouf (Djibouti) (*spoke in French*): Let me begin by thanking the Co-Chairs for convening today's high-level meeting on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants in an international environment marked by protracted crises.

Concerns about mass displacements of populations have occupied an important place on the international community's agenda for a number of years. Those movements present an urgent global challenge, to which our responses should be pragmatic, balanced, coordinated and comprehensive, while always maintaining strict respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. The unprecedented scale of the problem, which the International Organization for Migration (IOM) assessed in 2015 at 244 million migrants and refugees worldwide — a 41 per cent increase since 2010 — demands our collective and urgent mobilization, particularly since the issue's impact on national discussions in the political, social and security arenas is undeniable.

The General Assembly has already met twice in order to make a serious effort to tackle various aspects of the issues relating to international migration. I would like to recall that in 2006 our discussions revolved around the establishment of the Global Forum on Migration and Development as a mechanism for informal dialogue. In 2013 we adopted the Declaration of the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, which laid particular emphasis on respect for human rights and international labour standards, while reaffirming our commitment to fighting both human trafficking and racism and intolerance. Those aspects are more relevant and topical than ever.

In 2015, we made some significant progress with the adoption of texts and action plans that lent the issue of migration universal scope. Our efforts reached a further decisive stage on 25 July, when we worked together to adopt a resolution that affirmed the International Organization for Migration's integration into the United Nations system. Today we took an equally important step in adopting, for the first time, a framework for action that includes specific commitments regarding refugees and migrants and that is also aimed at ensuring that migration can be safe, orderly and regular.

Despite the fact that the various causes of such large-scale movements have been identified and are universally recognized, the international community is still dealing with many difficulties in preventing or managing them effectively. We stand by, powerless, before the recurring images in the media of shipwrecked migrants and refugees attempting journeys that are

often fatal, especially for the most vulnerable of them, particularly women, girls and children, victims of the sordid greed of criminal networks. Beyond the traditional dichotomies between developed and developing countries, between rich and poor, this is, at bottom, about our humanity, compassion, solidarity and indignation in the face of crises so tragic that the effects are reminiscent of the fratricidal wars that led to the creation of the United Nations.

Since 1977, the Republic of Djibouti has continued to host many refugees from neighbouring countries who have been compelled to flee the horrors of war or the devastating effects of drought. Despite our limited resources, we have never failed to offer the traditional welcome, hospitality, humanity and impartiality that are the founding values of our society and culture.

Djibouti understood very quickly the scale, complexity and duration of the humanitarian crises in the Horn of Africa, and it was in that spirit that we acceded early on to the relevant international instruments, such as the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1969 Organization of African Unity Convention on the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa. We have done the same with regard to regional initiatives, such as the European Union-Horn of Africa Migration Route Initiative, known as the Khartoum Process, and the African Union-Horn of Africa Initiative on Human Trafficking and Smuggling of Migrants.

In 2010, Djibouti was also among the States that brought to the General Assembly the African Union's decision to adopt a comprehensive action plan to combat human trafficking. Furthermore, together with other States of our subregion, in 2014 my country subscribed to the Addis Ababa Commitment towards Somali Refugees, committing to assuring Somali refugees asylum space for as long as necessary and improving the quality of asylum, while working to find solutions to their plight. With four camps, Djibouti is currently hosting almost 20,000 people, of whom just over 17,000 have refugee status and 3,000 are seeking asylum. Recently, in the opinion of the most senior officials of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Djibouti was the host country with the highest ratio of refugees to its land area.

The effectiveness of the national response depends upon a proper understanding of the kind of assistance that should be provided to people entering the country for various reasons but with the same need for protection. Over the years, we have developed and consolidated a support system under which the rights of refugees are respected, while ensuring that they have decent living conditions in the camps. The system also ensures that the groundwork is eventually laid to provide opportunities that will help refugees integrate into Djibouti society.

As a haven of peace in a troubled region, over the past few years my country has also been dealing with a increasing number of economic migrants travelling to the Gulf States, estimated to be close to 100,000. Many of them would have died without our coast guard, which has gone to the rescue of makeshift vessels in distress. Between March 2015 and July 2016, Djibouti became one of the few escape routes for foreign nationals and people fleeing the fighting in the neighbouring country of Yemen, and we took in almost 36,000 people.

A few days ago my country strengthened the system of protection for those with refugee status by enacting a supplementary law designed to strengthen the legal instruments already in force in the Republic of Djibouti for the protection of refugees and asylum seekers. It will also enable refugees to enjoy the same civil, social, economic and cultural rights as citizens of Djibouti.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now call on Her Excellency Ms. Anamaria Diéguez Arévalo, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Guatemala.

Ms. Diéguez Arévalo (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by commending the Co-Chairs on the discharge of their duties during today's high-level meeting on refugees and migrants.

The delegation of Guatemala is participating in this meeting in the firm belief that we need to conduct a dialogue, exchange knowledge and arrive at consensus in order to address this important issue. We have high expectations for the concrete results that we hope to see from this high-level debate when it comes to addressing the issue of large movements of refugees and migrants. All of us here realize that we have an opportunity to reach consensus through frank dialogue, and we wish to take advantage of this meeting so as to ensure that the issues that we are discussing are addressed at the highest possible political level and that genuine, applicable and urgently needed decisions can be taken.

Guatemala is aware of the pressing problems facing refugees and migrants, who are people seeking

better living conditions, people forced to leave their lands, homes and loved ones. For Guatemala and the other countries of Latin America, migration is a vital issue that can certainly not be ignored, owing to the enormous scale of migration movements.

There are two different issues, equally important but very different in their treatment. That is why we convened a meeting in Costa Rica on the new challenges of migration and displacement. We have noted that distinction and stated our disagreement with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, which considers all migrants to be refugees.

The Guatemalan migrants seeking a better life in the United States are not the victims of State political persecution. They are not being persecuted, nor are their lives in danger. They want a better life. If one analyses the regions where Guatemalan migrants originate, in the north-east region, there are no problems, so we cannot say that those people are fleeing violence in their places of origin or that that is why they are migrating. They want to join their families and they want their children to have opportunities. That is why we must establish a clear difference here, because we see that those two issues are being considered together in this high-level dialogue.

We are very much aware of the serious problems besetting European countries with large-scale migratory movements. But that does not mean that we in Latin American countries see things in a different way. We reiterate our commitment to the need to work and coordinate with other nations, both regionally and subregionally, so as to address the challenges of international migration, which is an unavoidable phenomenon today. We therefore need to create those conditions that ensure that our citizens do not feel that they have to leave their countries to find a better life. The resources and opportunities for better living standards must be in our countries.

As my colleague from Honduras already stated, we have a plan for prosperity, for providing funds. We need to work together in our State institutions so that we can focus on lining up cooperation in all those municipalities from which migrants come. Unless we improve the living conditions in those communities, we cannot address the problem of migration. We have to provide real answers to migrants. We have to provide opportunities for safe, orderly and regular migration. That must come through the expansion of legal ways to migrate in order to prevent human trafficking.

The Government of President Jimmy Morales Cabrera has asked the United States Government four times for help in that area, and we have not received it, not in this election year. Nevertheless, during the coming elections, we will continue to insist on such assistance, because we are the only Central American country that has not been granted it. It is necessary for us to change the rhetoric so that we can achieve more, while also abandoning the idea that migration is a problem that we have to confront. It is rather a challenge that we need to address. Migration is the right of all persons, and therefore an opportunity that should enjoy the protection of the State.

In fact, migration must not be linked with negative behaviour. We need to find the right responses, and we must dispense with the mistaken perceptions that link migrants with refugees, drug addicts or terrorists. Migrants set out on a journey to find a better way of life when their own countries do not offer it. They migrate today because they feel they need to, because they cannot find solutions to their problems at home, including a better life, and because of the economic opportunities in other countries.

Refugees, on the other hand, leave because of adverse political conditions or because of natural disasters or other causes that are not necessarily economic but make it impossible for them to remain in their countries of origin, which is the case for those groups that we have mentioned. Each of us, individually and in a coordinated way, must change that situation, and we need solutions that guarantee that safe, orderly and regular migration can prevail.

If only the United States were to implement the comprehensive migratory reforms that President Obama has prepared, but which for political reasons were not carried out. We are certain that if comprehensive migration reform and a programme for temporary workers were implemented, the immigration problems in our countries would see great improvements. Migrants add to our societies; they do not take away from us. As societies, at one time we appreciated and recognized the value that migrants added to us. They also provide knowledge and bring with them different worldly skills from those we have. With regard to special protection for our children, we must definitely avoid having children held at detention centres while

determining their migration status, which is clearly against the best interests of the children.

Guatemala believes that migration must be addressed using a comprehensive, humanitarian approach based on international cooperation and coordination and on shared responsibility. Our migration policies ought to be progressive, without restrictions. We ought to ensure that there is no xenophobia, discrimination of various kinds or racism. Such attitudes must be things of the past. No single country has generated a solution. It is high time for us to pull together in a serious effort to develop the coordination and exchange of information needed to provide the appropriate answers in a timely fashion.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Mobashar Jawad Akbar, Minister of State for External Affairs of India.

Mr. Akbar (India): I thank the Co-Chairs for convening this meeting on an issue that has continued to make headlines over the past years.

Although much of the push for these deliberations comes as a result of the more immediate impact of the refugee crisis in certain parts of the world, the problem itself has been with us for a very long time. The phenomenon of refugees is as old as war. The first consequence of war is death, the second is refugees. There is another kind of person seeking a new haven, the migrant driven by a second cruelty — hunger or economic aspiration. Both phenomena are visible in the present crisis. One driving force may seem to be the result of compulsion and the other voluntary, but both involve some form of compulsion.

To put the contemporary problem in perspective, the number of people on the move globally is estimated at nearly 250 million, or 1 in every 30 persons. That level is unprecedented. Refugees are currently estimated to number approximately 20 million, about 1 of every 12 persons on the move. Three quarters of the refugees come from just 11 countries, while 7 countries host more than half of all refugees. A fact that may surprise a few people is that almost 90 per cent of all refugees are hosted in developing — or as I prefer to call them, emerging — nations.

There is a long history of large communities seeking refugee in my country, India, which offers refuge not because it has a large bank balance but because it has a large heart. I recall vividly, when I was a young person, just getting ready for my first job, in 1970 or 1971, when our neighbour Bangladesh was fighting for its independence, that more than 1.2 million people from that country took refuge in India from the genocide they were facing. We have long experience with that, and we have developed situation-specific responses for each such instance. People seeking shelter in our country have never been turned back. Our record in that context is actually unique.

There is one point that I want to make, however. It is assumed that only host nations do not want refugees. I ask, do refugees want to become refugees? They do not. We must understand this and underline it, and therefore find out what drives them towards seeking refuge. Prevention is better than cure; perhaps prevention is the only cure. Preventing armed conflict, countering terrorism, building and sustaining peace, and facilitating sustainable development and governance will prevent people from being forced to leave their homelands.

India engages regularly with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. For many years, India House has partnered in the significant work being done by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.

In a way, all of us are migrants for one reason or another, but perhaps principally economic reasons, seeing as the human race originates from Africa. More recently, most nation-States and societies have been built upon waves of migration of various ethnic groups over the past centuries. This has been in many ways a positive development. Migration has continued to expand, now aided by the integrated economies of the past few decades. Nationalism is the contemporary architecture of stability, and we understand its importance. The intersection of human need in a refugee crisis and national imperatives make this a complex situation.

India has been both a destination and a transit country for a large number of migrants. Our own historical memories recall great migrations in the nineteenth century, due to famine and because the colonial Powers of the time wanted another form of labour after they abolished slavery in favour of so-called indentured labour. Coincidently, this year marks the 100-year anniversary of Mahatma Ghandi's seminal contribution to this crisis when he campaigned for the release of refugees in indentured labour in South Africa, and this practice was abolished altogether. In fact, in many

senses India's liberation and freedom movement begins with the elimination of indentured labour.

Our intense civilization has witnessed an ebb and flow that have been built on successive waves of migration throughout history, comprising traders, soldiers, missionaries, communities escaping persecution, and artists, academics and artisans seeking better opportunities. Indian traders and missionaries have also settled on distant shores and along the spice routes. In more recent times, Indian migrants, including a broad cross-section of professionals, small entrepreneurs, skilled and less skilled workers, have migrated to various countries around the world and offered a positive contribution to the diaspora.

Our Government focuses on the entire range of issues relating to Indian emigrants, especially those with lesser skills. India engages actively in facilitating the mobility of professionals under the General Agreement on Trade in Services Mode 4 of the World Trade Organization, and in issues relating to the equivalence of education and professional qualifications to taxation. We look forward to engaging with all partners, beginning next year in the development of a global compact for a safe, orderly and regular migration that is in the interests of all.

However, it is important to stress that today the geopolitics of the crisis point to terrorism and prove that it is the principal cause of refugee movements. Can we ignore this fact? We cannot. We do so at our peril. Terrorism is an existential threat, and hypocrisy towards this crisis will not do. There is no good terrorism or bad terrorism, and if we do not know the answer to this question then we need only ask the refugee if he considers any terrorism to be good or bad. I wish to stress that terrorism is the biggest danger to human rights. Ultimately, large movements of people across borders serve as reminders that our world has become a global village. We can only prosper or perish together. It is best that we learn to live in peace, prosperity and amity.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli, Minister of Interior of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Fazli (Islamic Republic of Iran) (*spoke in Farsi; interpretation into English provided by the delegation*): Allow me at the outset to express my sincere appreciation to the Co-Chairs of this very important and timely meeting on large movements of refugees and migrants. I wish them every success. We have high hopes that the outcome of this meeting will ensure effective steps towards solving one of the major problems facing the international community.

In addition to economic and social gaps and natural phenomena such as droughts and natural disasters, the root causes of human crises and large movements of refugees and migrants include foreign intervention and occupation and terrorism, as well as the destabilization of legitimate Governments, especially in recent years. The international community's lack of success in reducing and reversing these factors has resulted in ongoing displacement. We must pay due attention to the root causes of such crises, in addition to assisting refugees and displaced persons.

Large movements of refugees and migrants have effects and implications beyond national borders, and a single country alone cannot overcome them effectively. A collective response of international cooperation is therefore needed. This meeting will provide an opportunity to adopt a global approach towards the issue of refugees and migrants so that all countries can take full responsibility vis-à-vis such movements in origin, transit and host countries.

Due to its geographical position, for more than three decades the Islamic Republic of Iran has faced a massive influx of millions of refugees and displaced persons from neighbouring countries in challenging circumstances. During this period, the Islamic Republic of Iran has refrained from closing its borders. On the basis of its religious and humanitarian teachings and above and beyond its international commitments, it has accepted large numbers of these people. Despite very limited international support and being burdened by the conditions of an imposed war and unjust sanctions, the Islamic Republic of Iran has shouldered the heavy burden of this presence to the highest possible standard.

We have provided people in need with different kinds of services, including free education at all levels from elementary to higher education, health care and job opportunities. Such assistance goes beyond our commitments under the 1951 Refugee Convention. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, over the years the literacy rate among the refugee population residing in Iran has increased from an initial 6 per cent to over 67 per cent. All refugees, in one way or another, enjoy remedial services. Meanwhile, the implementation of the fifth phase of health insurance for all refugees with special

diseases and people in vulnerable situations is under way.

Having hosted a huge refugee population in protracted situations, numbering more than 3 million in some periods, the Islamic Republic of Iran has consistantly faced the heavy economic, political and social burdens of that presence. It is our conviction that any new commitment made by host countries should conform to their national capacities and legislations. Prior to that it is necessary for the rest of the international community to undertake new and additional commitments to refugees and host countries through a well-defined mechanism. We also renew our call to the international community to take the necessary measures to solve the refugee problem through sustainable voluntary repatriation and resettlement.

I wish to conclude by expressing the hope that this meeting, in a collective effort and through the constructive interaction of all representatives, will take viable and effective decisions aimed at resolving the problems and reducing the suffering of refugees and displaced persons.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Yemane Gebreab, Senior Political Adviser to the President of Eritrea.

Mr. Gebreab (Eritrea): Eritrea played an active role in preparations for this high-level meeting because we believe that the topic under consideration is an issue of vital importance for all peoples and nations of the world. In Eritrea's view, our goals must be the following.

First, we must agree on the need for and importance of legal, safe, and regular migration and provide meaningful avenues for it. It is really incongruous that in an increasingly globalized world where much is done to advance the movement of goods and finance, human mobility is stridently opposed and vehemently blocked. This needs to change, as much of the current crisis and suffering could be significantly reduced by means of safe and ordinary migration.

Secondly, we must protect and promote the rights and dignity of all migrants and provide them with opportunities for education, skills training and jobs, without which they cannot lead a life of dignity.

Thirdly, we must address the main perennial drivers of migration, including forced migration, which are growing global inequality, poverty, lack of development and violations of fundamental freedoms, as well as wars and conflicts, and take cognizance of other significant drivers such as demographic and climate change.

Eritrea believes that every nation has the primary responsibility to provide a safe, secure and dignified life for its citizens in their own country and to enable them to pursue opportunities in other countries. However, nations, and in particular developing nations, need support and solidarity to address the daunting challenge of ensuring peace and sustainable development. Meaningful global efforts are required to make our world more equal, fair and just. The propensity to seek unilateral economic, financial and trade advantages at the expense of developing countries; the resort to violations of international law and national independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty; the pursuit of power politics; and the imposition of unjustified pressures and sanctions must be firmly resisted.

On the issue of migrants, care must be taken to refrain from exploiting their plight and sufferingfor the purpose of targeting select countries for political ends, with disregard for humanitarian considerations.

Given the fate of previous summits and solemn declarations, including on migration, it is understandable that many are sceptical about the outcome and impact of this gathering. It is therefore imperative that in the national and global arenas, at the level of Governments, national institutions and regional and international organizations, we all shoulder our responsibility to end the suffering associated with migration, to protect and promote the rights of migrants, and to welcome human mobility as an integral and desirable feature of our globalized world.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Abelardo Moreno Fernandez, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba.

Mr. Moreno Fernandez (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Over the past two years, we have seen shocking images showing movements of desperate people crossing the Mediterranean en route to Europe, as a direct consequence of the destabilizing actions of NATO in the countries of the Middle East and North Africa, and of the underdevelopment and poverty that prevail in countries of the African continent.

There has been a movement of almost 2 million people, including 260,000 this year, through August. It

is overwhelming to learn that more than 30 per cent of these are children and that many of them have travelled alone, that 17,000 disappeared between 2015 and May 2016 after setting foot on European soil, and that 3,166 had died or been lost at sea as of last August. This figure is already close to the 3,770 such deaths registered for all of 2015.

Those primarily responsible for these movements must shoulder their responsibility for the humanitarian disaster created. Those who have escaped and are escaping from poverty and conflicts triggered by others cannot now be treated as criminals at the borders of the civilized countries that they attempt to enter or regarded as de facto criminals or potential terrorists.

These mass arrivals will not be held back by criminalizing them, building high border walls or holding camps, or by creating administrative or even military barriers. It is also incongruous that those who refuse to provide shelter today forget that many of their citizens needed protection in other countries during the two World Wars. Dealing with this increasing number of asylum-seekers and refugees requires a genuine commitment to international peace and security on the part of the major industrialized countries, which must forgo their hegemonic interests. It is also necessary to substantially change the unjust and exclusive international economic order. It is equally vital to address the reasons why millions of people emigrate every year, risking their lives in search of higher standards of living and increased well-being.

Migratory movements will persist if the 836 million people currently living in extreme poverty or the 795 million people who are starving, mainly in the third world, continue to be doomed to these plights. Moreover, why does the developed world close its eyes to the substantial contribution made by migrants to its current standard of living, while migrants are the victims of economic, cultural and social discrimination?

International cooperation is therefore vital so as to ensure genuine dialogue and cooperation that recognizes the shared responsibility of all States for migration and to ensure respect for the sovereignty and equality of States and other fundamental tenets of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as the integrity, dignity and well-being of migrants. However, some States act in a way that runs counter to this sort of cooperation.

An example is the so-called Cuban Adjustment Act and the wet-foot, dry-foot policy implemented by the United States against Cuba. Moreover, the Parole Program, still being blatantly used, promotes brain drain by encouraging health workers to leave their country, in a sector that is so important to Cuba and also in terms of the cooperation provided by my country to the peoples of the world.

Mr. Lungu (Zambia), Acting Co-Chair, took the Chair.

The Adjustment Act provides Cubans with preferential migratory treatment worldwide; they are automatically admitted to the United States even if they arrive in an irregular manner, in violation of bilateral migration agreements intended to ensure legal, safe and orderly migration. The wet-foot, dry-foot policy ensures the implementation of the Cuban Adjustment Act in connection with migrants who manage to land on United States soil, while those who are intercepted at sea are returned to their country of origin. While migrants are victimized, fall prey to gangs of human traffickers and are exposed to risks to their personal safety, the policy creates difficulties for transit countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, a group of which officially requested that the United States Government repeal the policy. Such policies encourage human smuggling and irregular migration directly from Cuban territory and third countries, including Cuban citizens who travel abroad legally. They have led to death and misfortune and discriminate against migrants from every country.

This meeting will produce tangible results only if commitments are entered into to strike at the root causes of migration and refugee flows, efforts are made to do more than just contain such movements, and solidarity and cooperation are strengthened.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Lubomír Zaorálek, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic.

Mr. Zaorálek (Czech Republic): From the outset, I would like to say that I know that migration is a natural process. Many times in the course of history, migration has triggered progress and development, but it is also true that migration is not always positive option. Too often, it is a forced solution with negative impacts on migrants, as well as the States of origin, transit and destination. Moreover, the nature and scale of the current migration crisis are as global and far-reaching as they have ever been. I wish to thank the Secretary-

General for convening this meeting because the Czech Republic is in the heart of Europe and fundamentally interconnected with its neighbours, and thus it feels strongly about the issue.

Our common and ultimate goal should be to improve living conditions worldwide so that everyone can live a decent life in their own country. Addressing the root causes of migration in the countries of origin must therefore be the cornerstone of our global efforts to tackle this crucial challenge of our time. We must put fundamental values and principles at the core of the solution to those root causes of migration.

Respect for the principles of good governance, the rule of law, protecting human rights and the fight against corruption is an essential prerequisite for ending massive outflows of people from the most affected crisis regions. However, those values and principles cannot be imparted from the outside. It is first and foremost up to the Governments and countries of origin to make them a reality. Without that, no other global efforts can be really effective.

I also need to stress, however, the crucial issue of security, because security is by no means excluded from this overall picture. There is a clear threat of infiltration of migration flows by violent extremists, which we need to address thoroughly. The rights to protection for migrations and refugees have to be balanced with the rights of receiving countries in order to ensure and maintain their security. While committed to assisting refugees, we stress the negative impact of migration flows on host and transit countries. If Europe is to maintain its ability to provide security as well as inspire democracy, freedom, the rule of law and respect for human rights worldwide, it must protect itself. In other words, the values and legal frameworks of the host and transit countries need to be respected by all migrating persons. Migration must carry on in an orderly and well-controlled manner at a speed allowing for the vital but complex task of properly absorbing and integrating incoming people.

To regulate the volume of migration, we have no other choice but to prioritize. We must clearly distinguish between refugees, on the one hand, and, on the other, migrants and economic migrants, who do not qualify for international protection. That can and must be done with full respect for the human rights of all migrants. Particular attention should be paid to the issue of forced migration, including internally displaced persons (IDPs). The number of IDPs is much higher compared to persons who have been forced to migrate across the border. Furthermore, those who embark on the journey abroad are often young and strong, compared to IDPs, among whom so many vulnerable groups are represented.

Addressing the root causes of large movements of refugees and migrants is a key but long-term ambition, but we cannot leave these issues for the long term. We have to act on the most pressing issues now. With migrant flows at their current level, we must urgently deal with them today. There are win-win answers to the migration challenge, and our obligation is to seek them out. Only if countries of origin, transit and destination work together side by side can a lasting solution be found, including streamlined global possibilities for legal migration and exchange. I hope that our meeting today will constitute a significant contribution to this global effort as we work together.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Barwari, Head of the Department of International Organizations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Iraq.

Mr. Barwari (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): I am pleased to participate in this high-level plenary meeting to address large movements of refugees and migrants. I thank those friendly countries that have helped Iraq and our people, in particular our refugees and migrants.

The causes of migration are manifold. They may be economic, social, academic, political or induced by armed conflicts. Migration can result from the absence of freedom of expression and the oppression of creative people, scientists and intellectuals in governmental institutions, transforming cultivated people into refugees. Those factors combined with others can drain countries of minds and human resources that represent the true infrastructure of economic and social development in any country. In addition to the demographic change caused by migration, it also destroys social structures. On the other hand, we must not disregard the positive effects of the what is called the brain-drain migration, which engenders creative interaction among cultures and mutual benefits from diverse experiences.

Human trafficking and smuggling networks play a major role in this phenomenon. These networks either seek financial gain or to implement their political agendas. Terrorism is among the main causes of

forced migration. My country is a notorious example of the effects of terrorism perpetrated by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIS) and other terrorist organizations, causing millions of people in Iraq to migrate. When the terrorist group ISIS infiltrated Iraq and gained control over several cities in June 2014, our Government faced the major challenge posed by large flows of migration and the displacement of innocent civilians fleeing their homes to safer areas.

Despite the economic and security challenges that Iraq has faced, leading to internal displacement, my country has never shut the door on our brother Syrians fleeing terrorism. In fact, we have hosted more than 250,000 Syrian citizens since the beginning of the crisis in Syria.

Terrorism and migration are interrelated. They are a global concern that goes beyond the borders of one country. No country alone, no matter how economically strong it may be, can contain all refugees of the world. No country, no matter how big its security and military capacity, can face terrorism alone. I therefore call on the international community to stand by Iraq in facing the dangerous phenomena of terrorism and migration by taking the following steps.

First, we need support for psychological rehabilitation programmes for women and girls — especially Yazidi women and girls — who have been raped and disgracefully and inhumanely abused by ISIS in Iraq. Secondly, civil servants in ministries and displacement and migration institutions must be trained to provide the necessary assistance to refugees. We also need support in finding a solution to the problem of refugees and asylum-seekers. Thirdly, donor countries must accelerate the delivery of international assistance in order to see to the needs of Syrian refugees and displaced people in Iraq. We call on countries to provide medical, psychological and social assistance to the victims of human rights violations. We hope that all host countries, including those that host Iraqi refugees, will do their utmost to integrate Iraqis into their society and protect their dignity.

We stress the right of Palestinian refugees to return, and we call for a just solution to their plight, in line with resolution 194 (III) and in line with the Arab Peace Imitative. We also call on countries to provide the necessary support and assistance to Palestinian refugees, through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, with a view to protecting their dignity.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Antonio García Revilla, Director-General for Multilateral and Global Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Peru.

Mr. García Revilla (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): Today's meeting provides us with an excellent opportunity to show that we are actively committed to protecting the rights of all refugees and migrants. We must urgently work together to protect the human rights of these vulnerable groups through a global approach to sustainable development, to which we have dedicated such effort to within our societies.

Among the major challenges before us, we need to take the measures required to combat human trafficking, among other related crimes, and be mindful of human rights when reviewing border management and detention policies. Furthermore, in the current crisis, we must counteract discrimination and xenophobia against migrants and refugees by fostering their inclusion and effective integration into our societies. It is also paramount that we focus on providing equal access to health services, education and decent work for refugees and migrants. In this regard, Peru is committed to working closely with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

On the issue of migration, we believe that it is time for greater cooperation at the global level and to recognize and ensure the human rights of all migrants, regardless of their migration status. It is vital that our national plans for development include actions that create more opportunities for safe, orderly and regular migration, with due respect for basic human rights.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development gives particular importance to migration and human mobility, which are recognized as a globalphenomenon and a key factor of sustainable development. In this regard, it is considered to be a multidimensional reality that is especially relevant to countries of origin, transit and destination, to which it contributes to inclusive growth and sustainable development. Peru actively shares this vision and is committed to its implementation. Addressing the issue of migration is one of the pillars of Peruvian foreign policy. We have improved our multifaceted approach to migration and adopted a national policy on migration management.

We believe that this meeting will mark a turning point that makes a difference in the lives of many refugees and migrants. We hope that by the end of the year, the General Assembly at its seventy-first session and the Security Council will reach a consensus and implement guidelines and specific policies that all Member States should implement urgently.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on His Excellency Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State of the observer State of the Holy See.

Cardinal Parolin (Holy See): The Holy See expresses its gratitude to the President and the Secretary-General for convening this gathering of global leaders to address one of the biggest humanitarian, political, social and economic issues of our time.

The enormous and complex challenges posed by immense movements of refugees and migrants can be solved only if we all work together. The Holy See insists on the need for cross-border dialogue and cooperation among nations, international organizations and humanitarian agencies. In this regard, partnership with religious organizations and faith communities is particularly helpful, as they are interested and skilled parties who are often first responders to refugee and migrant movements across borders, as well as to those of internally displaced persons.

The Holy See wishes to reiterate once more its urgent appeal for political and multilateral efforts to address the root causes of large movements and forced displacement of populations, especially conflicts and violence, countless violations of human rights, environmental degradation, extreme poverty, the arms trade and arms trafficking, corruption and the obscure financial and commercial plans connected to them. At the same time, it is necessary to ensure that development funds are equitably and transparently assigned, delivered and used appropriately.

The Holy See emphasizes the importance of the summit, which echoes Pope Francis' warnings about the globalization of indifference. In doing so, it is motivated by a reiterated commitment to protect each and every person from violence and discrimination, to guarantee appropriate and quality health care and to protect those who are vulnerable, particularly women and children.

The Holy See welcomes the agreement for a closer working relationship between the International Organization for Migration and the United Nations, and wishes to express its interest in participating in the continuing efforts of the Global Forum on Migration and Development and the Global Migration Group. We sincerely hope that these initiatives will stimulate better management of person-centered responses to refugee and migrant movements at global, national, and local levels.

Allow me to conclude with some words of Pope Francis that express his message to the summit:

> "I ask leaders and legislators and the entire international community, above all, to confront the reality of those who have been displaced by force, with effective projects and new approaches in order to protect their dignity, to improve the quality of their life and to face the challenges that are emerging from modern forms of persecution, oppression and slavery. They are human people, I stress this, who are appealing for solidarity and assistance, who need urgent action but also, and above all, understanding and kindness."

The Acting Co-Chair: In accordance with resolution 64/3, of 19 October 2009, I now call on the observer for the International Olympic Committee.

Mr. Bach (International Olympic Committee): The International Olympic Committee (IOC) fully supports and congratulates the Member States and the Secretary-General for the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1). We welcome the call for civil society to play an important role as a key partner in every region of the world. We at the IOC stand ready to help with a renewed commitment.

The unprecedented scale and magnitude of the global refugee crisis require a concerted effort by the international community to find long-term solutions for this human tragedy. At the IOC, we are developing new plans that will make a real difference in the lives of young people around the world. This unprecedented situation is a moral challenge and a call to action for us all.

That is why, one year ago at the General Assembly, the IOC announced the creation of the first-ever refugee Olympic team at the Olympic games in Rio de Janeiro, in 2016. That team of refugee athletes participated alongside the best 11,000 athletes of the world from all 206 national Olympic committees. They competed not as refugees but as any other Olympic team. Their

participation as a team sent a strong message of solidarity and hope to the millions of refugees around the world. The refugee athletes showed us all that despite the unimaginable tragedies and suffering that they have faced, anyone can contribute to society through their talent, skills and, most importantly, through the strength of their human spirit. Their participation in the Olympic games is proof that refugees are an enrichment to society, just as they are an enrichment to our Olympic family.

I would like to thank the Secretary-General in particular for his great personal commitment, and the High Commissioner for Refugees for his great cooperation. Without such cooperation, that great success would not have been possible. When the Olympic flame was extinguished, the Olympic games ended, but the IOC's support for the refugee athletes goes on. We continue by their side beyond the Olympic games, to help them integrate in their new home countries or to prepare to go back to their countries of origin to contribute to building a better society there.

Sport is a natural partner when it comes to realizing the goals for the social and economic progress of the international community. The historic 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development specifically recognizes sport as an important enabler for promoting peace and understanding. Sport can also be an important enabler for delivering the goals of inclusion for refugees and migrants.

Today, I reiterate our commitment to the international community that we will support the important efforts of the United Nations, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Member States to find sustainable solutions to the refugee crisis. In light of the New York Declaration, we want to strengthen that cooperation with a very concrete proposal — the IOC will build safe places for children to play sports. In cities where there is a displaced migrant populations or in refugee camps, sports can become the glue which will bind communities together. It can break down cultural and gender barriers in a safe environment, promoting social cohesion, peace and equality.

In short, these safe sports environments will be easily adaptable to local areas of need. They can provide not only a platform for all of the benefits that sport can bring but also better opportunities for other civil society actors to do their job, whether it be to provide education or health services. That initiative places sport at the very heart of public policy. In that way, sport can play its part in making the world a better place, and that is what all of us here are committed to doing.

The meeting rose at 5.20 p.m.